

**Minutes of Barnwell County School District
Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, April 23, 2024
(770 Hagood Avenue, Barnwell, SC 29812)**

Board Members Present: Chairperson Terry Richardson, Ronnie Brown, Becky Huggins, SGM Abraham Sexton, Dr. Andy Sandifer

I. Opening Business

- Call to Order, Reflection, Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, FOI Notice

Chair Richardson called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. SGM Abraham Sexton led the Reflection and the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Chair Richardson confirmed the FOI Notice, as required by the Freedom of Information Act.
- Approval of Agenda – Chair Terry Richardson

A motion was made by Dr. Andy Sandifer to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton. Hearing no objections, the agenda was unanimously approved.
- Approval of March 26, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes – Chair Terry Richardson

A motion was made by SGM Abraham Sexton to approve the March 26, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Dr. Andy Sandifer. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- There was no public participation.

Chair Richardson recognized the school board for perfect attendance since the board has been appointed, and stated that *"it has been a pleasure working with them. The goals of the school board are for the students and staff, and I have been proud of the progress that has been made, and it has been a pleasure working with the superintendent and this board."*

II. Superintendent Report –Dr. Crystal Stapleton

Dr. Stapleton began the district updates by sharing the final cut of the Barnwell County School District video. Chair Richardson asked what will now be done with the video? Dr. Stapleton stated that it will be put on the district's website and be shared by different means as well. Also it will be used for recruitment efforts through the HR department. Dr. Stapleton shared the following updates:

A. Update regarding Facility Plan- Phase II

The new district has a final draft contract with the following firms:

- SSOE as our Architect/Engineering Firm
- HG Reynolds for our Construction Management at Risk Services

Allen Smith with Halligan, Mahoney, and Williams represented the district in these contract negotiations. The contract negotiations have not stopped the process from happening.

The district leaders are currently looking at all programmatic needs of a new career center and consolidated high school and refining that list.

The district leaders have a standing meeting with all parties every other week, with additional meetings scheduled as needed. We are constantly talking and moving forward.

The board has planned a work session being planned with the construction and engineering firm to discuss their initial findings and data and what that cost may be. We are looking at the programming and trying to decide if there may be something extra that we can cut.

Chair Richardson shared information on the historical committees:

He stated that we are very committed to the history of the three high schools. Everyone knows that we had 10 or 12 high schools at one time, but we got down to seven. Our current plan is to get it down to one high school. We don't want to lose the pride that everyone has had in the three institutions. I will get the board members to help appoint a chairman of the committee the next time we meet and appoint the members of the committees. We want them to start now, but it's no rush but we need to start on it, and have a place to preserve that history in the new facility.

Kelly Edwards and Macedonia currently have historical committees. We have also discussed having to decide on mascot, colors and logo for the new high school. I think that Mike Beasley should serve in the capacity of the chairperson of that committee. He has been the mayor of Blackville, he is the Administrator for the town of Williston, he works for Barnwell Schools. He's also been a coach. He will have a big group working with him to make that decision. We also would like the opinions of the community.

The \$105 million from the Savannah River Settlement Funding was received by the school district and deposited into the district's account.

First Citizens Wealth Management, CFO and Superintendent met with the wealth management team on April 10th. The assets were transferred on April 17th into the investment account.

The portfolio will consist of Treasury Bills and US Treasury Notes. I will be structured so that we can request a draw at any time without jeopardizing our returns or paying penalties for withdrawals.

The yield to worst is 5.17.

What is “yield to worst”? a measure of the lowest possible yield that can be received on a bond with an early retirement provision.

The investment team will be sending updated projections to share with the board regularly, and the wealth management team is willing to come share any information with the board members in person, as well. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 26th to get the first update on the investments. In working with the wealth management team in the past, they are very receptive and willing to answer any questions or if there’s anything to follow up on.

Chair Richardson stated that the money will not be spent all at one time so we will receive a higher interest rate. The contractor and architect will give us that flow of money we need in order to be able to gain interest.

Dr. Sandifer asked if there was an update on the additional money that was discussed at the last meeting? Dr. Stapleton stated that there were not any updates, but we are inquiring about getting that \$10 million in our account so we can be drawing interest off that also.

Dr. Stapleton shared the following updates:

B. Update related to Barnwell County School District Consolidation Plan

- The district’s CFO has met with Enterprise Bank, as well. The district wants to ensure we continue a partnership with Enterprise Bank, and BCSD will continue to have a banking relationship with them. All of the new district’s schools will house the pupil activities accounts with Enterprise. All of the district’s food service accounts will also be housed with Enterprise.

What are pupil activity accounts? The Pupil Activity Funds account for monies related to extra-curricular activities sponsored by the School District and are managed at the individual schools.

The CFO will continue to work with Enterprise to explore additional ways the district can continue a relationship with them.

Curriculum, Instruction and Federal Programs

- Consolidated ML (multilingual learner) Handbook
- Consolidated Instructional Handbook
- Drafted Assessment Schedule for 24-25

- Drafted Consolidated Induction/Mentoring Handbook
- Merged 4K Curriculum across the district
- District Operations
 - Continue meeting with athletic directors and high school principals regularly to plan for athletics for the next school year, including coaches and positions
 - Meeting with all Maintenance supervisors to discuss the upcoming school year, responsibilities, and summer work
 - Work has begun at the district office building to prepare office spaces for the additional staff that will be housed in the building as of July 1st.
- IT Department
 - Purchased Anti-Virus for the new Consolidated district
 - Renewing Follett for new consolidated district
 - Purchasing new Microsoft Licenses for new consolidated district
 - Continue working with Level Data for connectors and renewals in our new PowerSchool server
 - Working closely with Traversa and school administrators for bus routes, locations (these meetings include SCDE, Traversa, Kelli Johnson, Honali Robinson, Chantane Tobin)
 - Switches for Williston have been installed
 - Working with PRTC for new servers, new domain
 - Installed new Wireless Access Points
 - Working on badge design with Card Integrators
 - Installed new network drops at the district office to accommodate new employees coming in
- Office of Student Services
 - Completed application process and received a NPI (National Provider Identifier) number for the new consolidated school district for Medicaid billing. Requested updated contracts from SCDHHS (S.C. Department of Health and Human Services).
 - Bimonthly meetings are continuing across the country.
 - Meeting with contracted service providers. Working on therapy projections and securing therapy services.

Career Center- Homeschool students at BCCC

- There are currently 4 homeschool students who are in programs at Barnwell County Career Center- 2 in cyber security, 1 in agriculture, and 1 in cosmetology. One is a senior and 3 are in the first year of their programs.
- Act 203, the Equal Access to Interscholastic Activities Act, permits home school students, as well as students from the Governor's schools and

charter schools, to participate in interscholastic activities of the school district in which they reside.

- We have consulted our attorney regarding the legislation:
"Interscholastic activities" are defined by the Act in Section 2(A)(4) as follows: "Interscholastic activities includes, but is not limited to, athletics, music, speech, and other extracurricular activities." Extracurricular activity means an athletic program or activity sponsored by the public school and offered, competitively or otherwise, to public school students outside the regular school day or program.

Recommendation: The district "grandfathers in" the students currently in programs at the career center and looks at all future situations on a case-by-case basis.

We come tonight asking for your blessing moving forward that the three students already enrolled are allowed to continue.

Chair Richardson asked if the students are required to pay? Dr. Stapleton replied "no." The Career Center Director, David Augustine added that if the students are inside the county, they do not pay, but if they are outside the county, they are charged a fee.

Ronald Brown asked "how are the students homeschooling for a career?" Dr. Stapleton replied that they attend the Career Center for that program, but the rest of their curriculum is at home.

- Representatives from each school across the county had an opportunity to send representatives to a website workshop hosted by Franklin McCormack. He will continue to provide training on the website program we will utilize in the new district. The new website is www.bcsd.net. This is where we continue to add to the new website. Whenever we do new policies, this is where they will be housed.

Ronald Brown asked if there is a system in place for the districts for emergency situations? Dr. Stapleton stated that the districtwide communication system is being reviewed.

Ronald Brown also asked if a decision has been made as to where the buses will be parked and if they will remain on their current campuses? Dr. Stapleton replied that, in the initial conversation, our buses will remain at their current locations. You wouldn't want a bus driver from Williston to have to drive all the way to Barnwell to get a bus. We are making sure that we get advice and recommendations from the state, but the plan is to keep the buses where they are currently parked.

Dr. Stapleton replied that in the initial conversation, our buses will remain at their current locations. You wouldn't want a bus driver from Williston to have to drive all the way to Barnwell to get a bus. We are making sure that we get advice and recommendation from the state, but the plan is to keep the buses where they are currently parked.

Ronald Brown asked how will providing transportation the first year for school of choice affect the current drivers? Dr. Stapleton replied that we included "contingent" upon the state providing transportation in the application, and no additional information has been provided. Everyone that applied for school or choice has been made aware that they will be providing transportation, and we have not moved forward with that being a requirement.

III. Old Business

IV. New Business

Approval of Out of State Field Experience for the Bands of Barnwell County School District
Bands of Barnwell County- November 3, 2024-November 5, 2024

Through Orange Sky Student Travel- This field experience will consist of:

- Give Kids the World: Student Performance
- Give Kids the World Village makes dreams come true for critically ill kids and their families. The 89-acre, nonprofit resort, provides weeklong, cost-free vacations to "wish kids" from around the world.
- Disney Springs
- Universal Orlando: Islands of Adventure and Universal Studios

Chair Richardson asked if the money needed is available. Dr. Stapleton replied that they will do fundraising. That's one of the reasons that they asked for approval early so that they can do fundraisers to offset that cost. The students will know after the fundraisers, how much the individual cost per student would be.

Dr. Stapleton presented the request:

- A. (Action) Motion was made to approve Out of State Field Experience for the Bands of Barnwell County School District

Motion made by SGM Abraham Sexton to approve the Out of State Field Experience for the bands of Barnwell County School District Bands of Barnwell County and it was seconded by Becky Huggins.

- B. Presentation of School Choice Information

Dr. Stapleton presented the following information:

- Our School Choice application closed April 7th. We had 107 applicants.
- Out of those applicants, 44 were coming back to the public school system or coming to the public school system for the first time.

- Homeschool- 5
- Private School- 9
- Day Care Program- 23
- Classified themselves as “Other” - 7

Chair Richardson asked if it was known why parents were requesting to enter public school after homeschooling or attending private school? Dr. Stapleton replied that many primary school requests were for the Montessori program, but an official survey has not been done to find the exact reasoning for the request to transfer from private school.

Ronald Brown asked if there was a system put in place such as a background check before students were allowed to transfer? Dr. Stapleton explained that now that the application window is closed, anyone that applies for a transfer outside of their zone, will have to list a reason, and it will have to come to the board for approval for the students that may be requesting a transfer and had past discipline referrals, we are communicating that information to the schools so that we are upfront.

Dr. Sandifer stated that he has had teachers concerned about handling a larger number of students, and he assured them that they didn't have to worry about that. Dr. Stapleton explained how the numbers are spread across the grade levels and discussions have occurred to ensure the numbers can be accommodated

C. Presentation of 2024-2025 General Fund Budget Information

- The state has given projections for revenues based on the Ways and Means but are subject to change as it moves between the House and Senate.
- Salaries have been finalized based on equalizing the salary schedules and putting employees on the appropriate schedule and step.
- The CFO is completing the budgets for each department and school in regards to purchase services and supplies.
- The CFO is working with Federal Programs and Curriculum to ensure that all federal and state funding is earmarked to include items to help relieve the General Fund in any way possible.

D. Approval of Work Sessions

- May 6th- less than half a day- Budget Discussion
- May 23rd- Facility Work Session at 8am

E. Approval of Second Reading and Approval of Policies

- The drafts are additional policies from the following section:

- SECTION G- PERSONNEL
- Policy GA - Personnel Goals - This policy outlines the general goals for personnel policies.
- Policy GBE - Staff Rights and Responsibilities - This policy establishes the board's vision for the rights and responsibilities of district staff.
- Policy GBEBC - Gifts To and Solicitations by Staff - This policy establishes the board's expectations regarding gifts to and solicitation by staff members.
- Policy GBEBDA - Criminal Record Checks - This policy establishes the structure for criminal records checks for those hired and volunteering with the district.
- Policy GBG - Legal Defense of Staff - The policy establishes the basic structure for the defense of district staff in certain legal matters.

There are 107 additional policies within Category G that are currently being revised to bring revised to bring for approval in April and May.

Notes:

Dr. Stapleton explained there no changes to the drafts from the first reading approval.

(Action) Motion was made to approve the Second Reading and Approval of Policies- Section G

Motion made Dr. Andy Sandifer to approve the second reading of Section G. The motion was seconded by Ronald Brown.

- F. (Action) Motion was made by Dr. Andy Sandifer to approve the first readings of polices E, F and G. The motion was seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton.

Approval of First Reading of Policies

Section E- Support Services

Section F- Facilities Planning and Development

Section G- Personnel

Dr. Stapleton presented the first reading of the following policies:

Section E- Support Services

- Policy EA - Support Services Goals and Priority Objectives - This policy establishes the board's vision for the role of support services in the operation of the district.

- Policy EB - Environmental And Safety Program - This policy establishes the board's vision for the district's environmental and safety program.
- Policy EBAB - Hazardous Materials - This policy establishes the basic structure for dealing with hazardous materials.
- Policy EBBA - Prevention Of Disease/Infection/Other Condition Transmission - This policy establishes the basic structure of the district's efforts to prevent disease, infection, and other condition transmission.
- Policy EBC, EBC-R1, EBC-R2, EBC-R3 - Emergencies - This policy establishes the basic structure for preparation for, and reaction to, emergencies by the administration. The administrative rules provide the structure for how essential work functions, instruction, and board meetings will continue to operate in an emergency that necessitates the closure of normal district operations.
- Policy EBCE - School Closings and Cancellations - This policy establishes the basic structure for dealing with school closings in the event of emergency, hazardous weather, and other situations. We are a E-Learning district.

Ronald Brown asked if we have a practices in place for emergencies? You're involving all entities like firemen and policemen so there should be something in place to know where to go and what to do.

Dr. Stapleton explained that there's a comprehensive plan in both of the districts now. Mike Beasley have been doing the initial work of looking at those and how they're alike and how they are different. We have a committee meeting in May that will give their input on that. The district already has it in place where we get the input at the end of the year from administrators, but this will allow us to have one comprehensive safety plan moving forward. One of the policies coming to you will be the one that list that more specifically. Dr. Stapleton reiterated that the district has such strong partnerships with our emergency services.

Ronald Brown asked what type of notification would be sent to the school board concerning closings or cancellations?

Dr. Stapleton stated that there was another policy that references that, but the wording was not put in both policies because it's already referenced. Ronald Brown agreed because the school board may have a parent call, and they are unaware of what is happening. Dr. Stapleton assured the school board that they would definitely be notified in such situation. The other policy will be researched so that the wording is the same in both policies.

- Policy EC - Buildings/Grounds/Property Management - This policy establishes the basic structure for the management of district property.
- Policy ECA - Security - This policy establishes the basic structure for security of district buildings and grounds.
- Policy ECAC - Vandalism - This policy establishes the basic structure for dealing with vandalism to district property.
- Policy ECB – Buildings and Grounds Maintenance - This policy establishes the basic structure for maintaining and repairing district property.
- Policy ED, ED-R - Materials and Equipment Management - This policy establishes the basic structure for management of district materials and equipment.
- Policy EGAD, EGAD-R - Copyright Compliance - This policy establishes the basic structure for district compliance with federal copyright laws and regulations.
- Policy EHB - Data/Records Retention - This policy establishes the basic structure for maintenance and retention of district records.
- Policy EI - Insurance Program/Risk Management - This policy establishes the basic structure for maintaining adequate insurance.

Section F- Facilities Planning and Development

Policy FA - Facilities Development Goals and Priority Objectives - This policy establishes the board's vision for development of district facilities.

- Policy FB - Facilities Planning - This policy establishes the board's vision for planning long range facility needs.
- Policy FF – Naming Facilities - This policy establishes guidelines for the naming of district facilities.

Section G- Personnel

- Policy GDR - Nonschool Employment of Support Staff - This policy establishes the board's expectations regarding non-school employment of support staff.
- Policy GDQD - Discipline, Suspension, and Dismissal of Support Staff - This policy establishes the basic structure for the discipline, suspension, and dismissal of support staff.
- Policy GDQC - Retirement of Support Staff - This policy establishes the basic structure for retirement of support staff.

- Policy GDQB - Resignation of Support Staff - This policy establishes the basic structure for resignation of support staff.
- Policy GCEC - Posting and Advertising of Professional Vacancies - This policy establishes the basic structure for posting of professional vacancies.
- Policy GCE, GCE-R - Professional Staff Recruitment - This policy establishes the basic structure for professional staff recruitment. It contains expanded information on utilizing best recruitment practices and non-discrimination statement.
- Policy GCB - Professional Staff Contracts and Compensation - This policy establishes the basic structure for professional staff contracts and compensation.
- Policy GCA - Professional Staff Positions - This policy establishes the basic structure for hiring and employing professional staff.
- Policy GC - Professional Staff - This policy establishes the definitions of professional staff positions.
- Policy GBI - Staff Participation in Political Activities - This policy establishes the board's expectations for staff participation in political activities.
- Policy GBGD - Workers' Compensation - This policy establishes the basic structure for the district's workers' compensation program.
- Policy GBGB - Staff Personal Security and Safety - This policy establishes the basic structure for addressing issues with staff security and safety.
- (Action) Motion made to approve First Reading of Policies- Section E
Motion made by Dr. Andy Sandifer and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton
- (Action) Motion made to approve First Reading of Policies- Section F
Motion made by Dr. Andy Sandifer and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton
- (Action) Motion made to approve First Reading of Policies- Section G
Motion made by Dr. Andy Sandifer and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton.

V. Executive Session

Becky Huggins made a motion to enter Executive Session for the purpose of *"Discussions of Out of District Transfer Request- Student A, Employment of Employee A, B, C, and D, and Contractual Matters as related to Negotiations with Architectural/Engineering Services and Construction Management at Risk Services."* Dr. Andy Sandifer seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The Board of Trustees entered Executive Session at 7:20pm.

Dr. Andy Sandifer made a motion to return to open session, and SGM Abraham Sexton seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved, and the Board of Trustees returned to open session at 7:45pm.

Upon return to open session, Ronald Brown made a motion to approve Student A Transfer Request. Becky Huggins seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Becky Huggins made a motion for the employment of Employee A per the Superintendent's recommendation. SGM Abraham Sexton seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Employment of Employee B and C was not presented for approval.

Becky Huggins made a motion for the employment of Employee D- per Carolina Cap. The motion was seconded by Dr. Andy Sandifer, and it was approved unanimously.

VI. Adjournment

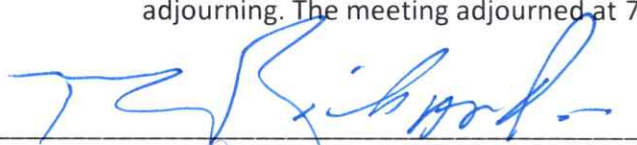
A. Announcement of Next Meeting

- Facility Work Session- March 23, 2024 at Barnwell Schools Administration Building

B. Meeting Adjournment

Chair Richardson asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Ronald Brown and seconded by Dr. Andy Sandifer. There were no objections to adjourning. The meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm.

Chair



Clerk

