

Minutes of Barnwell County School District Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, January 23, 2024

(12255 Main Street, Williston, South Carolina 29853)

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

I. **Opening Business**

A. 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.

B. 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 Ronald Brown. Hearing no objections, the agenda was unanimously approved.

C. Approval of November 28, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes – Chair Terry Richardson

Chairperson Richardson asked if there were any objections to approving the November 28, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes as presented. There were no objections to the minutes being approved as presented. The minutes were approved unanimously.

D. Approval of the December 18, 2023 Work Session Minutes- Chair Terry Richardson

Chairperson Richardson asked if there were any objections to approving the December 18, 2023 Work Session Minutes as presented. There were no objections to the minutes being approved as presented. The minutes were approved unanimously.

E. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

F. School Board Recognition and Appreciation

Dr. Stapleton recognized January as School Board Appreciation month, along with the

motto for this year being “In it to Win it.” She read the Governor’s Proclamation and recognized the school and the district for the gifts that were presented. She thanked the school board members for their commitment to the students in Barnwell County and their dedication to the work at hand. She acknowledged the task before them with the consolidation and expressed that the districts were truly appreciative for all they do. She also expressed that she was personally honored to work alongside each of them.

Chair Terry Richardson thanked the district and Dr. Stapleton and stated that he feels like every month is appreciation month.

G. Service Award Presentation

Chair Terry Richardson read a letter of appreciation from the SCSBA to SGM Abraham Sexton for his 15 years of dedicated service on the school board. He was presented with a lapel pin and service award certificate. Dr. Stapleton acknowledged Mrs. Susie Sexton, wife of SGM Abraham Sexton, as a retired educator and thanked her for sharing SGM Sexton with us.

H. Signing of the Ethical Principles

Chair Terry Richardson read the Ethical Principles and stated that the board takes the principles very seriously and believes in what’s listed for the best interest of each student. Each board member signed the Ethical Principles poster. Dr. Stapleton announced that a group picture will be taken when we break for Executive Session, and it will be shared with the SCSBA.

II. Superintendent Report –Dr. Crystal Stapleton

A. Update regarding Facility Study and Work Sessions

Dr. Stapleton shared the following updates:

The Board of Trustees had a work session in December to receive an updated report from the M.B. Kahn and SSOE facility study, which included facility needs or costs for “updating” facilities across the county, updated cost breakdowns for new construction or possible renovations, update programmatic reports, and next steps for options moving forward. They also answered questions in-depth that had been posed by the board members in the initial facility study report.

The Board of Trustees met during a January work session to review all information that had been presented by M.B. Kahn and SSOE and discuss next steps moving forward. That will be part of the Facility Plan presented later in the meeting. Also at that meeting, we discussed Phase III of the salary schedules, the procurement policy being presented to the state for approval, and consolidation plan updates.

Chair Terry Richardson stated that the more they learn, the more complex it becomes, and thanked Dr. Stapleton, the finance department, the curriculum department for

their hard work.

B. Update related to Consolidation Plan

Dr. Stapleton shared the following updates:

- The curriculum departments, which together are the new curriculum department for the new district, has met multiple times to dive deeper into all federal programs, well as look at each grade level's instructional materials, curricular support materials, and assessments.
- Additional meetings are currently scheduled. She shared two such meetings include:
 - Countywide ELA team, consisting of reading coaches and teachers, to determine selection of new ELA instructional materials.
 - Curriculum Materials meeting with representative teachers from all grade spans to review iReady and the benchmark platform to use for district benchmarks next year.
- The districts held the first meeting for new district focused on Early Childhood, and it was attended by representatives from each primary/elementary school in the county, with teachers as well as administrators. The following took place during that meeting:
 - Discussed programs currently in place, by location
 - Discussed possible expansions of PreK programs for the 2024-2025 school year
 - Discussed recruitment plans for PreK programs
 - Planned an Early Childhood Tour countywide to visit each school's current PreK programs in February. This is being scheduled for February.
- CFO Holly Hutto has completed the draft of the procurement policy to now be presented to the state. As was shared in the earlier updates, that was presented to you more in-depth at the work session.
- PowerSchool meetings for preparing for the PowerSchool consolidation process are happening weekly.
- Our IT leaders from both districts have met with me for a work session to discuss PowerSchool components being utilized, the server environment for both districts, firewalls, and much more. These collaborative meetings will continue as we move forward.
- Dr. Stapleton stated that, based on the board members' blessing during previous work sessions, we are moving forward to add Barbering/Hair Care and the Early Childhood to the Career Center Program. She shared that the district has a lot more planning to do with the Early Childhood program, and they are preparing quickly to be ready for registration and coursework for next year.

- Barber/Master Hair Care
 - Four course codes must be used for this program.
 - Barber/Master Hair Care 1 - Concentrator course
 - Barber/Master Hair Care 2 - Concentrator course
 - Barber/Master Hair Care 3 - Concentrator course
 - Barber/Master Hair Care 4
 - Human Services Internship, work-based credit
 - We are moving forward with adding a Barber/Master Hair Care program at BHHS next year that will be open to all students in the county.
 - Education and Training
 - The Education and Training Cluster prepares learners for careers as educators, administrators, trainers, counselors, and other education support services.
 - South Carolina has developed two high quality pathways for this cluster – Early Childhood Education and Introduction to Teaching. Students have opportunities to: develop knowledge and skills through work-based learning experiences, earn postsecondary credit, and industry recognized credentials during their high school careers.
 - Dr. Stapleton clarified that, based on the discussion in the January board work session, the district would be moving forward with plans to add an Early Childhood Education pathway for the 2024-2025 school year for a child development program.
- In February, The Pierson Collective will be onsite to film and get footage for a Barnwell County School District recruitment video and short videos we can use to recruit for the new district.
- Dr. Stapleton also gave an update on a Medicaid question that was asked in November.
 - Steps Already Taken:
 - Met with administrators, nurses, SPED staff, & therapists to update them on changes with Medicaid renewal.
 - Distributed parent letter & Medicaid fact sheet districtwide-3/15/23
 - Provided technical assistance for any parent or guardian who requested help.

- Met in person with anyone who asked for one-on-one support.
- Continue to run billable Medicaid eligibility monthly & contact parents/guardians to offer assistance for those whose coverage has lapsed due to failure to renew.
- Distributed parent letter & Medicaid fact sheet districtwide-8/31/23

III. Old Business

IV. New Business

A. Approval of BCCSD Out-of-State Travel Requests

Dr. Stapleton reminded board members that these were the travel requests shared at the December work session. She explained that the Board gave their blessing to move forward with registration, but they need to vote tonight on the official approval of those two out-of-state trips. These trips were the BCCSD Board Member Travel for 2 members to attend conference in Dallas, Texas and Kelly Edwards Elementary personnel and district personnel to attend out-of-state conference funded by the SDE.

- (Action) Motion was made to approve BCCSD Out-of-State Travel Requests. Motion made by Ronald Brown and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton. The motion as approved unanimously.

B. Approval of Spain International Field Experience for Summer 2025

Dr. Stapleton shared a request for an international field experience sponsored by Sophia Thomas at Barnwell High School to take place in Summer 2025 to Spain, including Madrid and Barcelona. Dr. Stapleton shared that Mrs. Thomas has already taken students to Costa Rica and has a group traveling to Peru this summer.

- (Action) Motion was made to approve Spain International Field Experience for Summer 2025. Motion made SGM Abraham Sexton and seconded by Dr. Andy Sandifer.

C. Approval of 2024-2025 School Calendar

Dr. Stapleton reminded the board members that the proposed calendar was discussed in depth at the December work session. She also shared a thank you to the team of individuals who met to determine the priorities for the proposed 2024-2025 calendar and a special thank you to Kelly Shealy. She explained that the 2024-2025 calendar does mimic the current 2023-2024 calendar closely. She then shared the following key notes regarding the proposed calendar, as previously shared during the work session.

- Tuesday, November 5, 2024, must be a holiday because it is a Presidential

election year.

- Christmas Day will fall on a Wednesday in 2024 (Leap Year), which means New Year's Day will also be on a Wednesday. With Wednesday being mid-week, that means the final day prior to Christmas break and the first day back after Christmas break aren't as 'clear cut' as in past years. Thursday, December 19, 2024 will be the last day prior to Christmas break and will be a half-day. Teachers will return to a work day on Monday, January 6, 2025, and students will return to school on Tuesday, January 7, 2025.
- Because our high schools all operate under the semester-block schedule, we definitely wanted to complete first semester prior to Christmas break in order to be able to complete the end-of-course exams for Algebra 1, English 2, Biology 1, and US History. With it being easier to schedule more student days prior to Christmas break than after Christmas break, there are 91 days scheduled in first semester (which gives an additional day before Christmas break to help administer make-ups for end-of-course exams) and 89 days scheduled in second semester. Both numbers of days more than allow for the state-required amount of seat-time for the high school credit-bearing courses.
- We have received such positive comments about this year's calendar with respect to having had a fall break with everyone already looking forward to having a February winter break that we wanted to keep those breaks on next year's calendar.
- Easter Sunday is much later in 2025 (Sunday, April 20, 2025) when compared to this year (Sunday, March 31, 2024). That date affected the placement of spring break, which is Holy Week, the week between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday (April 14-18, 2025).
- Memorial Day is on Monday, May 26, 2025, so the Friday before Memorial Day is Friday, May 23, 2025. It is a bit difficult to have students finish on the Friday before Memorial Day since May 23rd is relatively early. It would mean sacrificing two days off prior to that May 23rd date in order to do so. The final two student days, which are both half days, are on Tuesday, May 27, 2025, and Wednesday, May 28, 2025. That will put the last three work days for teachers on Thursday, May 29, 2025; Friday, May 30, 2025; and Monday, June 2, 2025. These three days will also be the three student make-up days that the state requires be listed on the official school calendar, even though we are an approved e-learning district.

(Action) Motion made to approve 2024-2025 School Calendar. Motion made by Dr. Andy Sandifer and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton. The motion was approved unanimously.

D. Approval of SC DOT Land Sale

Dr. Stapleton presented information regarding the SCDOT Project. The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) proposes to acquire a portion of BSD45 property for an SCDOT project to create sidewalks and do road upgrades. They have offered \$2,500 for “fee simple title to 6,036 square feet (0.14 acre) of land and all improvements thereon, if any.” Dr. Stapleton confirmed that the district attorneys have confirmed we do not have to go through a formal process to complete this sale.

- (Action) Motion made to approve SC DOT Land Sale. Motion made by Becky Huggins and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton. The motion was approved unanimously.

E. Approval of Phase III Salary Schedules

Dr. Stapleton reminded the board members of the information presented during the January work session regarding Phase III salary schedules, which include: principal, assistant principal, directors, chief officers, assistant superintendent, school support positions, district support positions, and substitutes. The proposed salary schedules equalize the current scales, and this equalization makes the new district comparable with other districts around us.

- (Action) Motion made to approve Phase III Salary Schedules. Motion made by SGM Abraham Sexton and seconded by Becky Huggins. The motion as approved unanimously.

F. Approval of Facility Plan Phase II

Dr. Stapleton reminded the board members that Phase I of the Facility Plan, the completion of an in-depth Facility Study, was complete. She explained that she took the discussion from the January board work session regarding the facility study updates and wrote the board’s priorities into a Phase II Facility Plan. She went step by step to ensure the wording accurately expressed the board’s next steps for the new district.

Phase II – Approval of Facility Plan for Barnwell County School District

1. Release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Architectural/Engineering Services and a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Construction Management At-Risk Services with a deadline for receiving proposal responses within two weeks.
2. A district committee will conduct the bid opening and narrow down proposals to “shortlist of firms” for interviews. The board members will choose from these firms in securing services.
3. Once selected, the district board and leadership will work with the chosen firms to develop specific plans and a timeline for a new career center and consolidated high school. The district will seek community input with this plan.

4. A plan will also be developed for renovating a K-8 space in both Williston and Blackville.

- (Action) Motion made to approve Facility Plan Phase II. Motion made by SGM Abraham Sexton and seconded by Becky Huggins. The motion was approved unanimously.

G. Approval of 2024-2025 School of Choice Application and Guidelines

Dr. Stapleton discussed changes that were made to the School of Choice Guidelines which were presented at the November meeting. These were changes that were discussed in the January work session.

They included:

- We have created an application as a draft for your review. This was shared at the January work session. We will reconvene the School of Choice committee to assist in creating a timeline.
- In discussions with the State officials, it has been requested that we have open School of Choice. During the application process, we would be able to determine the enrollment numbers, so we can ensure there is room for students/families requesting intra-district transfers.
- As part of our consolidation efforts, state officials said they would work with our new district to help provide bus transportation for children attending schools outside of their regular attendance area, should families need to use that transportation option. Providing transportation would be contingent upon assistance from the State.
- Please note we are in discussion now with our district attorney to work on a School of Choice policy to be approved at a board meeting. There is not currently a SCSBA model policy to follow which outlines guidelines, etc. With approval of the guidelines and application, we will move forward making plans until a formal district policy is adopted.
- (Action) Motion made to approve 2024-2025 School of Choice Application and Guidelines. Motion made by Dr. Andy Sandifer and seconded by Ronald Brown. The motion was approved unanimously.

H. Approval of First Reading of Policies

Superintendent Stapleton presented the following policies:

Policies Category C

General School Administration

- Policy CA - Administration Goals/ Priority Objectives - This policy establishes the district's administrative goals and objectives.

- Policy CB - School Superintendent - This policy establishes the board's vision for the role of superintendent.
- Policy CBA - Qualifications of Superintendent - This policy establishes the basic structure for the qualifications of the superintendent.
- Policy CBC - Superintendent's Duties and Responsibilities - This policy establishes the basic structure for the duties of the superintendent.
- Policy CBD - Superintendent's Contract - This policy establishes the basic structure for the contractual relationship between the board and the superintendent. It includes a section on the board's annual review of the superintendent's contract.
- Policy CBI - Evaluation of Superintendent - This policy establishes the basic structure for board evaluation of the superintendent that ensures board accountability to the community. It includes a statement on adjustments to the superintendent's contract and rate of compensation.
- Policy CC - Administrative Organization - This policy establishes the basic structure for the administrative organization of the district.
- Policy CCB - Line and Staff Relations - This policy establishes the basic structure for lines of authority within the district.
- Policy CFA - School Principals/ Building Administrators - This policy establishes the basic structure for the administrative operation of the schools.
- Policy CFC - Assignment and Transfer of School Administrators - This policy establishes the basic structure for the assignment and transfer of school administrators.
- Policy CH - Policy Implementation - This policy establishes both the vision and the basic structure for implementation of board policy.
- Policy CM - School District Annual Reports - This policy establishes the basic structure for issuing annual reports. It includes a section on making the annual reports available to the public.

Policies Category D

Fiscal Management

- Policy DA - Fiscal Management Goals and Objectives - This policy establishes the board's vision for the sound fiscal management of the district.
- Policy DB - Annual Budget - This policy establishes the basic structure of the annual budget.
- Policy DC - Taxing and Borrowing - This policy establishes the basic structure for the board's authority to tax and borrow funds for the maintenance and

operation of the district.

- Policy DD - Funding Proposals, Grants, and Special Projects - This policy establishes the basic structure for the seeking of additional sources of revenue for the district.
- Policy DFAC - Fund Balance - This policy establishes the basic structure for maintaining an appropriate fund balance.

(Action) Motion made to approve the First Reading of Policies of Category C. Motion made by Ronnie Brown and seconded by Dr. Andy Sandifer. The motion as approved unanimously.

(Action) Motion made to approve the First Reading of Policies in Category D. Motion made by Dr. Andy Sandifer and seconded by Ronald Brown. The motion as approved unanimously.

I. Second Reading and Approval of Proposed Policies

Dr. Stapleton presented the second reading of policies from the November 2023 meeting, with the following notes:

- Policy ACE – Service Animals (Public) - Example modified, content did not change
- Policy AC - Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity - There are blanks that will be filled in with the name of HR or person designated.
- Policy ADA; ADA-R - We have included a current mission statement and goals and objectives; however, the district would include an updated mission statement for the newly consolidated district.

(Action) Motion made to approve the Second Reading and Approval of Proposed Policies. Motion made by SGM Abraham Sexton and seconded by Dr. Andy Sandifer. The motion was approved unanimously.

V. Executive Session

Chair Richardson asked for a motion to go into Executive Session at 6:58p.m. for the purpose of *Discussion of Employment and Appointment of Current District Staff – Employee A and Employee B*. Motion made by Dr. Andy Sandifer and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chair Richardson asked for a motion to come out of Executive Session at 7:19p.m. Motion made by SGM Abraham Sexton and seconded by Dr. Andy Sandifer. Motion was approved unanimously.

Upon returning to open session, SGM Abraham Sexton made a motion to approve the

employment and appointment of Employee A. Dr. Andy Sandifer seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

Upon returning to open session, Dr. Andy Sandifer made a motion to approve the employment and appointment of Employee B. SGM Abraham Sexton seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously.

VI. Adjournment

A. Announcement of Next Meeting

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 7:20 pm.

Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Richardson", written over a horizontal line.

Clerk

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Abraham Sexton", written over a horizontal line.