

**BEAUFORT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Joint School Board & SIC Meeting Minutes**  
**March 14, 2024**  
**District Educational Services Center**  
**Hybrid Meeting**

**Members Present**

Richard Geier, Vice Chair  
Angela Middleton, Secretary

Ingrid Boatright  
Carlton Dallas  
Elizabeth Hey  
William Smith

Earl Campbell  
Chloe Gordon  
Victor Ney

**Members Absent**

Christina Gwozdz, Chair  
Rachel Wisnefski

Colonel Richard Geier called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m.

**Mr. Earl Campbell made the motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carlton Dallas. The motion passed 8/0. Chloe Gordon was absent from the vote. Christina Gwozdz and Rachel Wisnefski were absent from the meeting.**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and a moment of silence was observed. Colonel Geier stated that the media was properly notified.

Col. Geier shared the three topics on the agenda and proposed how the meeting should flow.

- **Cell phone use policy**

SIC members shared their thoughts on cell phones in classrooms, stating that cell phones in schools' policy isn't working. They each shared issues that are taking place at different grade levels, and shared research on the change in children's brains due to cell phone use.

Board members offered their thoughts on the Cell phone use policy.

The following were suggestions made by the SIC members and board members:

- Look into solutions and figuring out a way for students to keep cell phones without using them while in the classroom, such as an Ad Hoc committee or cell phone pockets.
- Collect all the data points to support addressing the cell phone policy.
- Look at what other districts are doing.
- Educate the community regarding cell phone and social media use.

Dr. Rodriguez shared his thoughts and shared initiatives another school district has started. He suggested finding a balance and having the district put out a survey to collect the community's thoughts on the topic.

- **Recess** (in the form of intramurals to help with physical and mental health)  
SIC members shared their thoughts and experience with how recess used to be.

Board members agreed that intramurals are important. Some believe that there is a correlation between screen time and physical activity and suggested the 4x4 block schedule may also be an issue.

The following were suggestions:

- unrestricted play in elementary school.
- Allow each school to determine their student's needs; if a student needs to read in thirty minutes rather than go to recess, the student should read, rather than having a blanket policy put in place.
- Physical activity/outdoor enrichment is vital, especially at the middle school level.

Dr. Rodriguez shared that this topic isn't far off from the cell phone use topic. He stated recess is required at the elementary level but is optional at the middle and high levels.

- **Hall monitors**

SIC members shared their thoughts and own experiences regarding hall monitors. Some stated that there are too many students and not enough adults to supervise in overcrowded schools. Hall monitors circumvent issues from happening before they escalate, and they can become liaisons for students. Hall monitors are great with the right person and with the right training in place.

Board members shared their thoughts on the need and use of hall monitors.

The following are some suggestions:

- Have parents visit schools whenever they're allowed to. Hall monitors were volunteers with training.
- Have a program called Dads on Duty and using military personnel.
- Pilot hall monitors in a district school.

Dr. Rodriguez shared his experience as a principal in a school with hall monitors. He shared that it would be about \$1.8 million to staff two hall monitors per middle and high school, and he would rather see that money fund additional SROs.

Colonel Geier stated the district and Board has work to do and a lot of discussion ahead. He also stated that the Board will provide information and/or decisions that come from the district discussions.

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:32 p.m.

(Signature on Official File Copy) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: May 7, 2024

Angela Middleton, Secretary, Board of Education

Minutes prepared by Robyn Cushingberry, Executive Assistant

### **Motion Summary**

**A motion was made to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded and passed 8/0. Chloe Gordon was absent from the vote. Christina Gwozdz and Rachel Wisnefski were absent from the meeting.**