

Minutes of Barnwell County School District
Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, August 27, 2024
(9286 Marlboro 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.

Dr. Stapleton asked that the agenda be amended to add Student O- Diploma Request to Executive Session.

Approval of Agenda – Chair Terry Richardson

A motion was made by Dr. Andy Sandifer to approve the agenda as presented with the amendment to add Student Request for Student O- Act 207 Diploma Request to Executive Session. The motion was seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton. Hearing no objections, the agenda was unanimously approved.

- Approval of June 25, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes – Chair Terry Richardson

A motion was made by Becky Huggins to approve the June 25, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Dr. Andy Sandifer. The minutes were approved unanimously.

- Approval of the July 12, 2024 Work Session Minutes- Chair Terry Richardson

A motion was made by Dr. Andy Sandifer to approve the July 12, 2024 Work Session Minutes. The motion was seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton. The minutes were approved unanimously.

- Approval of the August Personnel Report- Chair Richardson

A motion was made by SGM Abraham Sexton to approve the August Personnel Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Ronald Brown. The motion was approved unanimously.

- There was no public participation.

II. Superintendent Report -Crystal Stapleton

- A. Ronald Brown, board member received Boardmanship Institute Recognition. He was recognized for 18 years of service on multiple school boards and reaching Level 3 by the SCSBA. He was presented with a lapel pin and certificate by Chair, Terry Richardson.

Dr. Stapleton stated that the school board would normally have a financial report for approval, but it would be on the agenda next month with July being the first month of consolidation.

Chair Richardson acknowledged that all employees are appreciated for their hard work.

Dr. Stapleton presented the following updates:

- B. Barnwell County School District Consolidation Plan

Comprehensive Safety Plan

- Facility Inspections: Scheduled quarterly walk-throughs to ensure buildings are safe and well maintained.
- Emergency Preparedness: Reviewed emergency plans, and drill schedules. Each school conducts training with their staff on what to do in emergency situations.
- Knox Box Walkthroughs with law enforcement. Knox boxes are boxes located outside the buildings that only the fire department and law enforcement have access to get into our buildings. They are being updated throughout the county.
- Career Center entryway- The district has installed card scan system on front door. Next week, they will be installing the camera system, so the front office can determine entry to the building.
- Active Shooter Drill- Friday, August 2, 2024
 - This training was planned and hosted by the Barnwell County Sheriff's Office and included our county's law enforcement agencies and emergency response agencies.
 - During the drill, the participant's went through the steps of our safety plan, worked with dispatch (911) to report the incident, observed law enforcement response in real time, had first responders respond onsite to aid victims, and

practiced evacuating classrooms as law enforcement would do in an emergency situation such as this. The county also activated the emergency command center for the county. John Moody, our IT Director has access to cameras and the capability to unlock doors remotely.

- Some parts of the drill were simulated but not practiced in real time, such as transportation responding onsite, staff being evacuated off campus, etc.

School Bus Safety

- Our students have been participating in bus evacuation drills. They are done annually so that our students know what to do in certain situations.

Dr. Stapleton thanked the district's transportation department for ensuring our students know how to act swiftly and responsibly in emergencies.

Dr. Andy Sandifer thanked everyone that was a part of the drill because you always want to be prepared for unforeseen circumstances.

Energy Conservation

- Audits/Compliance: Weekly walkthroughs and communication to ensure energy setbacks are in place and identify cost-saving opportunities.
- Savings for 2023-2024 School Year: \$279,709.33
- Mike Beasley is working now to expand the program to all parts of the school district.

Cell Phones-Update

- Prior to the 2024-2025 school year starting, Franklin McCormack and a collaborative team of administrators and representatives across the county came together to review the current discipline codes and cell phone policies currently in place.
- At the same time, the district cognizant of the work being done statewide to create procedures and policies regarding cell phone use in schools. The district team consisting of representative staff members countywide, will reconvene when a new policy is adopted based on the state's new requirements.
- According to the approved budget proviso, school districts were directed to adopt and implement a policy that "prohibits access to personal electronic communication devices by students during the school day."
- The State Board of Education (SBE) is in the process of adopting a model policy that school districts will use as the basis for the local policy that is created and adopted. The South Carolina School Board Association (SCSBA) recommended that school districts wait to make policy changes regarding cell phone use until there is an adoption of a model policy by the SBE.

- The SBE is working to get more feedback from districts and stakeholders before finalizing the policy, and school districts were told board members are expected to give final approval in September.
- If the timeline remains as expected, Barnwell County School District would plan to create a policy and implement no later than January 2025. The state’s goal, as communicated to school districts statewide was to create a policy and make sure that, “the policy is being fully implemented in every South Carolina school no later than January 2025.”

Booster Club Registration

- A new law has been adopted by the State legislature, which became effective March 11, 2024. South Carolina §59-17-170 that outlines new requirements for Booster Club.
- Each booster club within a school district must annually register with the school district board of trustees.
- A booster club that fails to register by August first is prohibited from disbursing any funds for any purpose until registration has been completed.

Human Resource Updates

- Dr. Stapleton stated that the beginning of a school year is always very busy, but if you add in consolidation, it becomes extremely busy and she’s very appreciative for everyone’s hard work.
- HR is pleased to report that all applicable employees have been informed of their signing bonuses and retention bonuses. The department is working closely with Finance to have those funds distributed early September.
- The District Teacher of the Year process has begun, and the district is delighted to be hosting Teachers of the Year at the September meeting.

Special Education Update

- Although not at full capacity, EDPlan SC is up and running for the IEP and Section 504 components. The Medicaid component will hopefully be operational soon.
- Currently about 95% of users have been set up in EDPlan SC. The department is conducting Virtual EDPlan SC drop-in office hours for any Special Services teachers/therapists/504 Coordinators to drop-in virtually on Google Meet for technical assistance, to work through setting up upcoming meetings, and/or to address any other issues within the new program.
- The Special Services Department has completed numerous assessment trainings for the Brigance, WIAT-4, and DAB-4 for all SPED teachers. They have also completed MTSS Coordinator, Section 504, and SPED professional development.

Pre-K Programs- Enrollment Data as of 8/19/24 – Dr. Stapleton shared the current enrollments totals for the child development programs within the district.

- Barnwell Primary School
 - 60 four-year olds are registered for CERDEP (traditional 4K)
 - Waiting list of 9 four-year olds
 - 42 three-year olds and four-year-olds are registered for Montessori
 - Waiting list of 6 three-year olds
- Kelly Edwards Elementary
 - 20 four-year-olds are registered for CERDEP (traditional 4K)
 - Waiting list of 8 four four-year olds
- Macedonia Elementary Middle School
 - 32 four-year-olds are registered for CERDEP (traditional 4K)
 - 8 open slots
 - Our Chief Academy Officer is currently working with the state office to determine next steps for adding three-year-olds to that class.
- 154 children are currently being served in preschool programs.
 - Breakdown:
 - 133 four-year-olds
 - 21 three-year-olds

Aerial Baxley will be doing monthly family events and moving around the county. When You move around the community, you get better response.

\$250,000 Investment in Early Childhood Initiatives – Dr. Stapleton announced a \$250,000 investment by the State for early childhood initiatives in Barnwell County. She gave thanks to Chair Richardson for his role in getting this funding for the district and also acknowledged the support of the local legislative delegation.

- Home- Visiting with Healthy Families America

We are currently working with Child’s Trust of South Carolina to plan implementation of the Healthy Families America home visiting program.

 - Brainstorming how to expand current presence in Barnwell County
 - Creating timeline for moving forward
 - Seeking spaces and identifying families to be ready to get them into program as soon as possible
 - Beginning now to serve as many as possible through current program that is in place
- Home Visits are offered intensely and over the long term, with well-defined progress criteria and a process for increasing or decreasing intensity of service. Home Visitors typically serve 12-15 families.
 - Promoting “Positive Parenting Practices”

- Improving child safety and preventing maltreatment
- Improving child health
- Supporting child development and school readiness
- Improving maternal health and wellness
- Increasing economic self-sufficiency
- Providing linkages and referrals
- Reducing family violence

Dr. Stapleton thanked the different groups and organizations that have supported our schools and families at the start of the new school year.

Dr. Stapleton presented the following updates:

C. District Updates

Tropical Storm Debby surprised in week one of school. Dr. Stapleton thanked everyone who assisted with helping.

- Many agencies worked together around the clock to assist with the roadways, rural routes, and provide us with the information regarding whether school operations were safe.
- As always, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to our county's Emergency Management officials and preparation team for their tireless efforts in preparing us for emergency situations like this. All of our departments worked quickly and efficiently to ensure staff and families had what they needed during those days.
- To our Curriculum Department and those who created lessons, they ensured our schools and families had what they needed to initiate eLearning quickly and that assignments were available to allow us to operate as an eLearning day versus a school day we would have to make up later in the year- even in the absence of Chromebooks.

Athletic Programs

- Athletic Extracurricular Programs: Mike Beasley has been actively developing protocols and expectations with principals and athletic directors to enhance the operation, safety, and quality of athletic extracurricular activities.
- The current guidelines associated with the **GOLDEN PASS** are listed below:
 - Must be processed at the respective high school in Barnwell County School District
 - Lives in the zone for the respective high school in Barnwell County School District as evidenced by the patron's driver's license
 - 65 years of age or older

- Only valid at the respective high school athletic department sporting events
- Not valid at SCHSL sanctioned playoff contests or tournaments

School Updates and “Good News”

Blackville Hilda High School

- Out of the eight seniors that graduated this past year with dual degrees from Denmark Technical College, six started off their Fall semester at their respective colleges as Juniors.

Kelly Edwards Elementary School

- KEES has selected the news team for the 2024-2025 school year! Students on the news team are chosen through a highly selective process that includes an application, audition, and teacher recommendation.
- The news crew is 100% student led and comprised of 5th grade students who maintain academic and behavioral excellence.

Williston-Elko Middle School

- The following students demonstrated a polite attitude and respectful behavior and are identified for August’s character trait:
 - Taylor Renee Gibson- 6th Grade
 - Arianna Smith- 7th Grade
 - Dahlia Najera- 8th Grade

Williston-Elko High School

- Clemson Career Workshop (CCW) recruits high school rising juniors to participate in a two-year program. This opportunity is open to students nationwide. Congratulations, Jakeran Cuthbertson.
- Students who participate in the Clemson Career Workshop will:
 - Get an inside look into Clemson.
 - Learn tips and tools needed to prepare for college and beyond.
 - Gain exposure to science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), arts and humanities and social and behavioral sciences.

Barnwell Elementary School

- Congratulations to Ms. Jennifer Morris, STEM Lab Teacher for being selected as a

Recipient of the South Carolina Farm Bureau's Learn to Farm Mini-grant of \$500.00.

- This past week's Mustang Mall Shoppers were recognized by their teachers for their outstanding behavior and for being great school citizens! Congratulations to all!

Barnwell High School

- BHS kicked off PLC meetings last week with the English Department where they worked together through the new textbook adoption.
- Cameron Austin was named to the Mr. Football Watch List.

Barnwell County Career Center

- Congratulations to BCCC's Angie Overton being named the new president of the Rotary Club of Barnwell County!

District Opening Event

- We had our first districtwide event. It was organized to be an event for everyone to come together, relax, enjoy food, get to know one another, be entertained, and win great prizes.

Dr. Andy Sandifer expressed how well organized the event was and how much he enjoyed himself. Dr. Stapleton also mentioned that SGM Abraham Sexton was in attendance also.

Encourage and Lift Others

- One key message from our shirts was to "encourage and lift others." We have challenged ourselves as a district to approach every day with a positive attitude and make intentional efforts to support and uplift one another. We need to focus on we're all in this together and here to support each other
- Creating an environment of positivity and support benefits everyone and helps make a meaningful difference in our school and district community.
- Being thoughtful in our interactions is crucial in fostering a true sense of family. It is through these acts of kindness and generosity that we can truly make a difference across Barnwell County.

Chair Richardson acknowledged the work of the district and stated that Dr. Stapleton currently leads the largest employer in Barnwell County.

III. **Old Business**

IV. **New Business**

A. Approval of Guinyard-Butler Middle School Field Study to Colonial Williamsburg

- (Action) Motion made to approve the Guinyard-Butler Middle School Field Study to Colonial Williamsburg

Motion made by SGM Abraham Sexton to approve the Guinyard-Butler Middle School Field Study to Colonial Williamsburg and seconded by Becky Huggins. The motion was approved unanimously.

B. Approval of 2024 National FFA Convention Trip in Indianapolis, Indiana

- (Action) Motion was made to approve the 2024 National FFA Convention Trip in Indianapolis, Indiana

Motion made by Becky Huggins to approve the 2024 National FFA Convention Trip in Indianapolis, Indiana and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton. The motion was approved unanimously.

C. Dr. Stapleton presented the First Reading of the following policies:

Policies Category A

Foundations and Basic Commitments

- Policy ADF – District Wellness - This policy establishes the basic structure for enhancing the learning and development of lifelong wellness practices. The policy outlines:
 - food and beverage availability
 - district goals and health wellness
 - other activities that promote student wellness
 - information about the District Wellness Committee/Coordinated District Health Council

Policy Category D

Finance

- Policy DI- Fiscal Accounting/Audits- This policy establishes the basic structure for accounting for and reporting upon the district's financial resources.
- DI-R- Administrative Rule- outlines specific criteria for selecting an auditor
- Policy DKB- Salary Deductions- This policy establishes the basic structure for deductions from salaries of staff members.

- Policy DN- School Properties Disposition- This policy establishes the basic structure for disposal of district property that is no longer needed.

Policy Category I

Instruction

- Policy IJA- Comparability of Services- This policy affirms the district’s commitment to equality among staff and materials.
- Policy IJOB- Resource Persons/School Volunteers- This policy outlines the appropriate use of resource persons/school volunteers.
 - IJOB-R- Administrative Rule- outlines more specific guidelines and procedures for volunteers in the schools (i.e. follow policies, no access to student records, etc.)
- Policy IKA- Tests and Examinations- This policy outlines the district’s policy on teacher-developed tests and examinations.
- Policy IKACA- Parent Conferences- This policy details the importance of parent conferences.
- Policy IKAD- Grade Adjustments- This policy outlines the steps by which a parent can appeal a student’s grade.
- Policy IL- Evaluation of Instruction Programs- This policy outlines the general parameters of evaluation of instruction.
- Policy ILB- Test/Assessment Administration- This policy outlines state-mandated test security.
 - Policy ILB-R- Administrative Rule- outlines specific details as it relates to state testing through the State Board of Education.
- Policy ILBB- State Program Assessments- This policy outlines the various state-mandated assessments.
 - Policy ILBB-R- Administrative Rule- outlines specific information in regard to statewide assessment programs, including administration of the test, training, noting deficiencies, assistance to students, and make-up tests
- Policy IMB- Teaching about Controversial/Sensitive Issues- This policy outlines the approval process for teaching about controversial subjects.
- Policy IMDA- Patriotic Exercises- This policy outlines the parameters for patriotic awareness and civic involvement in accordance with law. (i.e. Veterans Day)
- Policy IMDB- Flag/Motto Displays- This policy outlines the parameters for flag and motto displays in accordance with law.

- Policy IMG-Animals in Schools- This outlines the district’s policy on the use of animals in schools as it relates to classroom pets and prohibited practices.

(Action) Motion made for First Reading of Category A- Foundations and Basic Commitments, Category D- Finance, and Category I- Instruction

Motion made by Becky Huggins for the approval of the First Reading of Category A- Foundations and Basic Commitments, Category D-Finance, and Category I- Instruction and seconded by Ronnie Brown. The motion was approved unanimously.

D. Dr. Stapleton presented the Second Reading and Approval of the following policies:

- Policy GBAC - Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation - This is model information on all other forms of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Includes an investigation procedure identical to procedures required by Title IX for sexual harassment to streamline all civil rights-related internal investigations.
- Policy GBC - Staff Compensation - This policy establishes the basic structure for compensating district staff.
- Policy GBE - Staff Rights and Responsibilities - This policy established the board’s vision for the rights and responsibilities of district staff.
- Policy GBEA - Staff Code of Ethics - This policy establishes the board’s expectations for the ethical behavior of staff.
- Policy GBEBB - Staff Conduct with Students - This policy establishes the board’s expectations for staff conduct with students. Expanded language in bullets in rule.
- Policy GBEBE - Gavin’s Law (Sexual Extortion) (Staff) - This policy establishes the board’s commitment to a learning and working environment free from sexual extortion.
- Policy GBEC - Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace and Schools - This policy establishes the board’s expectations regarding a drug and alcohol-free workplace and schools.
- Policy GBED - Tobacco-Free Workplace - This policy establishes the board’s expectations regarding a tobacco-free workplace. The General Assembly amended the existing law related to the prevention of youth access to tobacco and other nicotine products to continue its prohibition against the use of any tobacco product by any person in school buildings, in school facilities, on campuses, and any other school or property owned or operated by a local school district. To that effort, the definition of “Tobacco Product” was changed along with other conforming provisions to the mandatory public-school tobacco-free campus policy.
- Policy GBEE- Internet and Electronic Communication- This policy establishes the structure

of employee-specific portions of the district's acceptable use policy. It is read in conjunction district-wide acceptable use policies.

- Policy GBEF- Cellular Phones and Other Personal Electronic Communication Devices- This policy establishes the board's expectations regarding employee use of cellular phones and other personal electronic communications devices.
- Policy GBG- Legal Defense of Staff- This policy establishes the basic structure for the defense of district staff in certain legal matters.
- Policy GBH- Staff Participation in Community Activities- This policy establishes the board's expectations for staff participation in community activities.
- Policy GCD and GDD were discussed later in the meeting in more detail.
- Policy GCF- This policy establishes the basic structure for professional staff hiring.

Policies Category I

Instruction

- Policy IB- Academic Freedom- This policy outlines the district's belief on the academic freedom of students and teachers.
- Policy IC- School Year- This policy outlines the length of the school year, including information on the school calendar and make-up days.
- Policy ID- School Day- This policy outlines the length of the school day at various levels.
- Policy IG- Curriculum Development, Adoption, and Review- This policy outlines the district's process for curriculum development and approval.
- Policy IGCA- Service Learning- This policy outlines the district's beliefs on service learning and provides a general overview of learning.
- Policy IHA- Basic Instructional Program- This policy outlines the basic instructional program of the district.
- Policy IHAA- English-Reading-Writing-Language Arts Education- This policy outlines the district's goals with respect to English/Language Arts Education.
- Policy IHAB- Mathematics Instruction- This policy outlines the district's goals with respect to mathematic education.
- Policy IHAC- Social Studies Education- This policy outlines the district's goals with respect to social studies education.

- Policy IHAD- Science Education- This policy outlines the district's goals with respect to science education.
- Policy IHAE- Physical Education- This policy outlines the district's goals with respect to physical education. Please note that this policy includes a provision that marching band may be substituted for physical education if the instruction includes the state standards.
- Policy IHAF- Arts Education- This policy outlines the district's goals with respect to arts education.
- Policy IHAJ- Computer Technology-Literacy- This policy outlines the district's goals with respect to computer/technology literacy.
- Policy IHAN- Driver Education- This policy outlines the district's driver training course.
- IHAO- Environmental Education- This policy outlines the district's goals for environmental education.
- Policy IHAP- Consumer Education- This policy outlines the district's goals for consumer education.
- Policy IHAQ- Career-Transition to Work Education- This policy outlines the district's goals for career education.
- Policy IHBA- Special Education-Programs for Students with Disabilities- This policy outlines the district's special education program with information on educational rights for adult students and information on employability credentials for students with disabilities. The exhibit is a delegation of rights form for special education students who turn 18 while still enrolled.
- Policy IHBB- Gifted and Talented Education- This policy outlines the district's gifted and talented program.
- Policy IHBC- Programs for At-Risk Disadvantaged Students- This policy outlines the district's programs for at-risk students.
- IHBEA- Instructional Services for Multilingual Learners- This policy outlines the district's programs for English learners.
- Policy IHBF- Medical Homebound Instruction- This policy outlines the parameters and requirements of the district's medical homebound program.
- Policy IHBH- Charter Schools- This policy outlines the parameters for charter schools and their students within the district.
- Policy IHC- Proficiency-Based Credit- This policy outlines the district's proficiency-based credit system.

- Policy IHCA- Summer School- This policy outlines the district’s summer school program.
- Policy IHCD- Advanced College Placement- This policy outlines the district’s Advanced Placement course program.
- Policy IHCF- Childcare Programs- This policy outlines the district’s afterschool program.
- Policy IHD- Adult-Community Education- This policy outlines the district’s adult education program.
- Policy IIA- Grouping for Instruction- This policy outlines the parameters for student grouping at the classroom and school levels.

(Action) Motion was made for approval of the Second Reading and Approval of Section G- Personnel and Section I- Instruction.

Motion made by Dr. Andy Sandifer for the approval of the Second Reading of Section G- Personnel and Section-I Instruction and seconded by Becky Huggins. The motion was approved unanimously.

V. Executive Session

Motion made to go into Executive Session by Becky Huggins at 7:07 p.m. and seconded by Ronnie Brown to discuss:

- School of Choice Request- Student A- N
- Diploma Request-ACT 207- Student O

Motion to come out of Executive Session at 7:42 p.m. Motion made by Dr. Andy Sandifer and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton.

Motion made to approve School of Choice Requests - Students A-N. Motion made by Becky Huggins and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton. The motion was approved unanimously.

Motion made to approve Student ACT 207 Diploma Request- Student- O. Motion made by Becky Huggins and seconded by Dr. Andy Sandifer. The 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 SGM Abraham Sexton and seconded by Ronnie Brown. There were no objections to adjourning. The meeting adjourned at 7:44 pm.

Chair 

Clerk 