

Minutes of Barnwell County School District
Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, October 21, 2025
(770 Hagood Avenue, Barnwell, SC 29812)

Board Members Present: Becky Huggins, Felicia Devore, Rosey Anderson, Catrena Hughes-Parker, John Melton, Jr.

I. Opening Business

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

Becky Huggins called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Becky Huggins led the Reflection and the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Becky Huggins confirmed the FOI Notice went out as required by the Freedom of Information Act.

B. Approval of Agenda – Becky Huggins

A motion was made by Rosey Anderson to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Catrena Parker-Hughes. Hearing no objections, the agenda was unanimously approved.

C. Approval of Consent Agenda Items- Becky Huggins

- **Approval of the September 16, 2025 Board Regular Meeting Minutes – Becky Huggins**

The motion was made by Felicia Devore to approve the September 16, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by John Melton. The motion was approved unanimously.

- **Approval of the October Personnel Report- Becky Huggins**

The motion was made by Felicia Devore to approve the September Personnel Report. The motion a seconded by John Melton. The motion was approved unanimously.

- **Approval of August Financial Report – Becky Huggins**

The motion was made by Felicia Devore to approve July Financial Report. The motion was seconded by John Melton. The motion was approved unanimously.

D. There was no public participation.

II. Recognition- Superintendent

A. 2024-2025 Boardmanship Institute Recognition- Dr. Stapleton

Becky Huggins, Chair recognized and acknowledged, and congratulated Felicia Devore, Vice-Chair for reaching Level 5. She was presented with a plaque and lapel pin.

B. "Every Student Matters. Every Moment Counts." T-shirt Design Contest Winner and Honorable Mention

Dr. Stapleton provided information on the recent BCSD Design T- Shirt Contest. The judging criteria included:

- Creativity and Originality
- Relevance to District Values
- Visual Impact and Clarity
- Printability and Color Use

Samelea Baxley a student at WEHS was named the winner.

Aliyah Daniels of BHS was named Honorable Mention.

The winner and honorable mention were each presented with a certificate and gift basket.

Dr. Stapleton thank Mrs. Natasha Broxton for leading this initiative and getting the team together for the judging.

The school board members individually congratulated the winner and honorable mention and expressed being appreciative of their hard work and dedication.

III. Superintendent Report- Superintendent

A. Update related to the BCSD Facility Plan

Dr. Stapleton gave the following update related to facilities, as well as shared photos from around the district:

- We have had additional design and development meetings regarding food service, cafeteria/kitchen, and follow-ups on high bay areas.
- We have approved the Design and Development Plans pending updates made to the food service area and any changes as noted following our feedback meetings with the different areas and principal/leaders.
- HG Reynolds and SSOE are working together to create considerations for the new high school-based on the Design and Development plans. This includes, but is not limited to, flooring options, parking lots, landscapes and irrigation, etc. We have also reviewed allowance items included in the cost estimates. This includes IT, access controls, sound reinforcement, acoustics, and more.
- Next Steps
 - Awaiting final cost estimates for the different portions of the high school project.
 - Continuing to work with the City of Barnwell and GHD to have utilities run to that area.
 - Beginning the interior design portion of the project soon.

B. District Updates

Dr. Stapleton shared the following district updates:

- Facility Projects
 - Our Operations Department continues to work on projects throughout the District.

- The inclusive playground at BPS is complete and there was an opening ceremony on the morning of Tuesday, October 21st at 9:00am.
- The windows and doors project is continuing.
- Gyms at BHS, WEHS, and BHHS have been refurbished as basketball season prepares to start.
- We've had to replace several HVAC systems at BHHS and KEES and have repaired others at BHS and BES.
- Fire Alarms at BHS and GBMS passed inspections, now the last phase will be conducted by the State Fire Marshall on November 12th, which is an early release day.
- More cameras and key scans are being installed at BHHS, WEMS, BPS, and WEHS to continue to improve security.
- According to Mike Beasley, "Projects are flowing steady and will continue throughout the school year."
- We have finalized the land donation to BCSD. Coastal Development Partners cut a piece out of the original parcel they purchased to build a Dollar General and donated the remaining 16.926 acres to the school district.
- Barnwell Primary School Inclusive Playground Dedication
 - On Tuesday, October 21st, we celebrated the dedication of the new inclusive playground at Barnwell Primary School.
 - Emphasized the core belief behind the project:
 - "Every child, regardless of their abilities, deserves a place to play, to laugh, and to belong."
 - Expressed gratitude to key contributors:
 - School Board Members- recognized and thanked for their ongoing support
 - Barnwell Primary School Administrators, teachers, and staff- commended for fostering a culture of inclusion and love
 - District Facilities Team, Special Services Department, Chief Financial Officer, and Construction Company- acknowledged for planning, funding, and constructing the playground.
 - Closed with appreciation to all in attendance and invited everyone to join in celebrating and enjoying the new inclusive playground.

IV. Old Business

V. New Business

A. Approval of BCSD 2026-2027 Modified School Calendar– Action Item

Dr. Stapleton shared the highlights regarding the proposed 2026-2027 Modified School Calendar. She also expressed gratitude to Kelly Shealy for all the work she does to prepare for the academic calendar proposals and versions for us each year.

- Fall Break: As in current school year, the calendar includes a full week for fall break. This structure also allows for the inclusion of two potential student make-up days, should they become necessary due to inclement weather or other disruptions.
- Our staff has overwhelmingly expressed their appreciation for a fall break, as well as parents who have reached out saying how much they enjoyed that time.
- Election Day: (November 3, 2026): One notable change from the 2025-2026 calendar is the observance of Election Day, which falls on Tuesday, November 3, 2026. Election Day is a required school holiday on even numbered years.

- With this adjustment, the calendar comprises 89 instructional days in the first semester and 91 instructional days in the second semester--similar to the structure used in 2024-2025 during the presidential election year.
- Winter Break: The calendar maintains a full week for winter break. Additionally, two intercession days are scheduled for the Thursday and Friday of that week, consistent with the format used in recent years.
- Good Friday: Easter Sunday will be observed on March 28, 2027. The calendar included Good Friday (March 26th) as a day all schools and the district office are closed.
- Spring Break (April 5-9, 2027): While Easter Sunday occurs relatively early during next school year (March 28, 2027), Spring Break is scheduled for April 5th-9th, rather than the week immediately following Easter.
 - During the calendar development process, two versions were considered- one aligning Spring Break with Easter, and one placing it later in April.
 - Teacher and staff representatives on the committees unanimously recommended the April option, citing better balance between winter break and the end of the school year. They expressed that a March break felt too close to winter break and left an extended, uninterrupted stretch leading into summer.
- End of Year: Memorial Day falls on Monday, May 31, 2027. Accordingly, the final student day is scheduled for Friday, May 28th, providing a clean transition into the holiday weekend and summer break for students.

Overall, our committees and teams who reviewed the proposed 2026-2027 calendar supports instructional needs, provides appropriate breaks for students and staff, and complies with state-mandated guidelines, holidays, and election observances.

(Action) Motion made for the Approval of BCSD 2026-2027 Modified School Calendar- Becky Huggins

Motion made by Catrena Hughes-Parker to approve the BCSD 2026-2027 Modified School Calendar. The motion was seconded by John Melton. The motion was approved unanimously.

B. Second Reading and Approval of Policies

1. Second Reading and Approval of Policy BEA- Livestreaming of Board Meetings

(Action) Motion made by Felicia Devore for the approval of the Second Reading of Policy BEA- Livestreaming of Board Meetings. The motion was seconded by Rosey Anderson. The motion was approved unanimously.

2. Second Reading and Approval of Policy GCLE- Unencumbered Time- Action Item

Motion made by John Melton for the approval of the Second Reading of Policy GCLE- Unencumbered Time. The motion was seconded by Felicia Devore. The motion was approved unanimously.

VI. Executive Session

Motion made to go into Executive Session by John Melton at 6:29 p.m. and seconded by Felicia Devore for the purpose of:

Discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, a student, or a person regulated by a public body or the appointment of a person to a public body.

- *Employee Contractual Matters- Employee A*

Discussion of negotiations incident to contractual agreements.

- *Specifically related to current BCSD facilities and projects*
- *Receipt of Legal Advice regarding Property Transfers*

Motion made to come out of Executive Session at 7:07 p.m. Motion made by Rosey Anderson and seconded by Catrena Hughes-Parker. The motion was approved unanimously.

There was no action taken.

VII. Adjournment

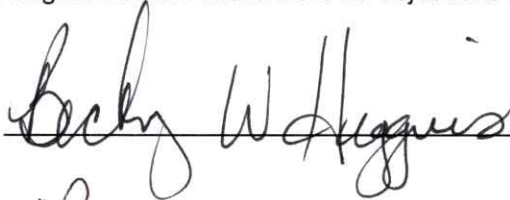
A. Announcement of Next Meeting

Work Session is scheduled for November 10, 2025 at 8:00 a.m. at Barnwell Schools Administration Building.
Regular Board Meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at Barnwell Schools Administration Building.

B. Meeting Adjournment

Chair Huggins asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Felicia Devore and seconded by Catrena Hughes-Parker. There were no objections to adjourning. The meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Chair



Clerk

