

RICHMOND COUNTY



BOARD OF EDUCATION

864 Broad Street – 4th Floor
Augusta, Georgia 30901-1215
(706) 826-1124 – Fax: (706) 826-4613

MRS. SHAWNDA STOVALL
President

DR. MALINDA COBB
Superintendent of Schools

MR. ED LOWERY
Vice-President

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 6, 2026

For media inquiries only, contact:
Michael Meyers
RCSS Communications
(706) 945-6002

An Open Letter to the RCSS Community: Changes To Our Next Public Hearing

Dear Families and Neighbors,

Over the past several weeks, we have had the privilege of listening to you. We have heard your stories, felt your passion, and gained a deeper understanding of the profound heritage that T.W. Josey High School represents.

Thank you for your patience as we navigated recent schedule changes due to inclement weather. This brief pause has ensured that we do not rush this vital process and that every voice has the opportunity to be heard. We invite you to join us for our rescheduled public hearings on February 9 and February 12. Consequently, the Board of Education has moved the final vote on the Master Plan to Monday, February 23.

Strategic Planning for the Josey Family

We want to emphasize that the concerns raised during our meetings — including student cohesion, facility usage, and campus safety—are challenges we have been proactively addressing for months. Our staff has worked tirelessly, evaluating complex logistics and data to ensure a seamless transition. Our strategy has always centered on putting students first, which includes our commitment to keeping the Josey attendance zone open until the new school is ready for its debut.

Protecting Our Student-Athletes

Our planning also involves critical issues such as supporting the sports infrastructure already in place — this included the turf on the existing stadium, the baseball facility and the competition gym— which would offer the

students the ability to continue competing in sports. We have also been considering factors behind the scenes, specifically regarding Georgia High School Association (GHSA) implications. We have meticulously considered how these shifts affect athletic eligibility, region alignment, and school classification. We understand how these decisions ripple out to impact not just Josey, but all schools within the district. We have planned accordingly to prioritize fairness and maintain a competitive environment for all our student athletes.

Our Commitment on February 23

When we meet on February 23, if the Board moves forward with the Master Plan, it is our intent to introduce a formal motion to keep the T.W. Josey High School student body and staff together as one unit. This proposal facilitates a move where the Josey family transitions together into the Murphey campus facilities during the construction of the new academy. This was a complex, calculated decision. We have weighed every variable—from fiscal responsibility and logistical impact to construction timelines, which may extend from two years to three to accommodate this transition—but our priority remains doing what is right for our students. While the right path is not always the easiest or most popular, preserving the social, athletic, and academic cores of the Josey community is, and has always been, our North Star.

Preserving the Legacy

Regarding the name and history of the school, let us be clear: our intent has always been to honor the legacy of Dr. Thomas Walter Josey. To ensure this is handled with the respect it deserves, we will follow established policy by forming a Naming Committee, and we will follow the initial motion with a second motion to make this effective immediately. This committee will be comprised of you: alumni, students, staff, and community stakeholders. You will have a direct seat at the table to ensure that as we build for the future, we continue to honor the history that defines us.

As we chart the future of our school system, our goal is not just to change buildings, but to amplify the excellence that already exists. The Board and the Richmond County School System are committed to walking this path with you. By focusing on both innovation and community cohesion, we will emerge stronger. As we continue through this process, we encourage the community to attend the public hearings. You can also join us online if you cannot come in person, review frequently asked questions and more at rcboe.org/masterplan.

Thank you for your continued partnership,

Shawnda Stovall

President

Richmond County Board of Education, on behalf of the Richmond County Board of Education

