BEAUFORT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
School Board Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2025
Hilton Head Island Middle School
Hybrid Meeting

Members Present

Richard Geier, Chair	David Carr	Leah Frazier
	Elizabeth Hey	Victor Ney
	Alphonso Small	William Smith

Members Absent
Ingrid Boatright, Secretary
Carlton Dallas, Vice Chair
Chloe Gordon
Isaac Gordon

Colonel Richard Geier called the meeting to order at 4:30pm

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussion of Personnel Matter re: Personnel Ratification Report pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(1); discussion and negotiations incident to Amendment #7 with M.B. Kahn Construction Co., Inc. for the Rebuild and Renovations of Hilton Head Island High School Phase 1B & 2A, and 2B, 2023 Referendum Scope Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) proposal pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); receipt of legal advice relating to two settled claims covered by the attorney-client privilege pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); discussion and receipt of legal advice regarding contractual matters covered by the attorney client privilege pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2). The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr. The motion passed 6/0. Alphonso Small was absent from the vote. Ingrid Boatright, Carlton Dallas, Chloe Gordon, and Isaac Gordon were absent from the meeting.

Action from Executive Session

Colonel Geier called the meeting back to open session at 6:00pm.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion to approve the Superintendent's recommendations for employment listed on November 1, 2025, to November 30, 2025, Personnel Ratification Report. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr. The motion passed 6/1. William Smith voted against the motion.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Board of Education approve Amendment #7 with M.B. Kahn Construction Co., Inc. for the Rebuild and Renovations of Hilton Head Island High School Phase 1B & 2A, and 2B for a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) of $147,240,115. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr. The motion passed 7/0.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion to approve the agenda with the removal of OE3 and OE15 from the consent agenda and to be placed on Board Business Action. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr. The motion passed 7/0.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and a moment of silence was observed.

Colonel Geier stated that the media was properly notified.

Student Performance – The May River High School Choir under the direction of Mr. Forrest Starr.

Under Points of Celebration – Dr. Rodriguez and the Board recognized the following:

- October Student of the Month
  Southern BCSD Kindergarten Student Isa Thoduvil, M.C. Riley Elementary
- Athletic Recognitions
- Education Support Professional of the Year
- Strategic Compensation Grant
- ACE Cognia Certification

Public Comments –

- Rob Kilgore – Savannah GA spoke about Academic Freedom, and book censorship.
- Richard Bisi – Hilton Head Island, spoke on Board Governance.
- Tony Cambria – Bluffton, spoke on Board Governance and Board Action.
- Mary Foster, Beaufort, spoke on the book reviews.
- Ivie Szalai, Beaufort spoke on sexually explicit books.
- Bernie Scolaro, Bluffton, spoke on book bans.

2025 South Carolina Instructional Materials Uniform Complaint Forms for the month of February Challenging Library Books.

- Colonel Geier read the letter that was sent to the State Superintendent stating the process that the Board went through to review the books that were challenged previously. Ms. Ivie Szalai, the complainant, the opportunity to go through the five books that she filed a complaint on. Other members of the public were given the opportunity to speak in favor of Ms. Szalai complaint in banning the books or speak on behalf of retaining the books. The following are the books that being challenged:
  - Milk and honey, by Rupi Kapur
  - Oryx and Crake, by Margaret Atwood
  - November 9, by Colleen Hoover
  - Perfect, by Ellen Hopkins
  - The Handmaid's Tale, by Marget Atwood
- Mr. David Cook spoke in support of Ms. Szalai on the book Handmaid's Tale.
- Ms. Mary Foster spoke against banning the book Handmaid's Tale.
- Colonel Geier did a role call for each member on whether to retain, restrict, and remove any of the books. The following results:
  - **Retain**
    Milk & Honey – David Carr, Leah Frazier, Alphonso Small
    Oryx & Crake – David Carr, Leah Frazier
    November 9th – David Carr, Leah Frazier
    Perfect – David Carr, Leah Frazier
    Handmaid's Tale – David Carr, Leah Frazier
  - **Restrict**
    Milk & Honey – Richard Geier, Elizabeth Hey, Victor Ney, William Smith
    Oryx & Crake – Richard Geier, Elizabeth Hey, Victor Ney, Alphonso Small, William Smith
    November 9th - Richard Geier, Elizabeth Hey, Victor Ney, Alphonso Small, William Smith
    Perfect - Richard Geier, Elizabeth Hey, Victor Ney, Alphonso Small, William Smith
    Handmaid's Tale - Richard Geier, Elizabeth Hey, Victor Ney, Alphonso Small, William Smith
  - **Remove** – No one voted to have any of the books removed.

Chair's Report – Colonel Geier reported that five members attended the SC School Board's Association Legislative Delegation Assembly meeting that was held in Charleston. Carlton Dallas, Leah Frazier, Victor Ney, Alphonso Small, and Mr. Smith were in attendance. Mr. Ney provided an update to the Board.

Committee Reports

Academic – David Carr, reported on the November 20, 2025, Academic Committee. The agenda included items OE -13 Discipline and OE-14 Learning Environment/Treatment of Students. The Committee approved the versions presented and voted to have them placed on the Consent Agenda. The OEs will be discussed under Board Business since they were removed from the Consent Agenda.

- OE-13 Discipline
- OE-14 – Learning Environment/Treatment of Students.
- The following Administrative Regulations were presented:
  - SS-35 Contest for Students
  - SS-41 Student Insurance Coverage
  - SS-53 Student Fees, Fines, and Charges Winners
  - SS-56 Cost Assistance for Academic Competition Winners
  - IS-25 Multilingual Learner Program (MLP)
  - IS-25 PROGRAMA PARA ALUMNOS MULTILINGUES (MLP) (Spanish Version)
  - IS-44 Test and Examinations
- Dr. Carr provided a brief reading of the Health Advisory Committee Award that was presented to Chairman Geier, and Dr. Rodriguez.

Ad Hoc Policy – Victor Ney, reported that the policy that the committee worked on will be covered under Board Business where he will make the appropriate motion.

Finance - Tonya Crosby provided an update on the November 13th meeting, and the December 4th Committee meetings. The committee reviewed the standard monthly reports; the 1st Quarter FY26 Financial Reports; FY2027 Budget Calendar, and the committee reviewed the Cost Center Report for FY2025. The following Administrative Regulations were reviewed with the Committee.

- E-6 Public Gifts/Donations to Schools
- OS-7 Funding Proposals and Special Projects
- OS-11 Inventories
- OS-18 Cash in School Buildings

- Mrs. Crosby also presented the annual Audit Results that were shared with the committee at the December 4th meeting.
- Mrs. Crosby presented SS-42. Even though it is an Administrative Regulation, it requires motion.

  Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the full Board approve the Beaufort County District Wellness Policy, SS-42, as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr. The motion passed 6/0. Alphonso Small was absent from the vote.

- The OE6.1 – 6.8 Financial Administration is under Board Business for approval.

Legislative – There wasn't a report provided. Mr. Dallas was absent from the meeting.

Operations – Victor Ney, chair reported on the November 18th and the December 3rd Operations Committee meetings. The committee had a presentation from Mr. Joel Jaylor from Novant Health. The Group is planning to add a Free-Standing Emergency Department and Primary Care Clinic on the property located south of Robert Smalls International Academy. In coordination with the City of Beauort and SCDOT, the project includes a proposed road and waterline connection south to RSIA to WK Alston Drive. To complete the connection, an easement from Beaufort County School District would be required. The committee requested that the group

come back to the committee with additional information. The committee also reviewed several OEs that are found under the Consent Agenda. The Committee also discussed the property in Lobeco, and the possibility of making a land swamp with the County. The committee also asked that the administration bring back recommendations on the value and use of the property for Beaufort County School District. The monthly construction update was presented, as well as a presentation on how construction materials are selected. The December 3rd Operations committee meeting covered HR's Oes that are also listed under the Consent Agenda. Administrative Regulations HRS-16 Staff Leaves and Absences, and HRS-16.2 Military Leave was presented to the committee.

Technology – Ingrid Boatright, chair reported on November 10th Technology Committee meeting. The committee discussed the cost and comparison of BCSD Livestreaming with the County and possible alternatives. The committee also reviewed the Survey questions that will be sent to parents, staff, and community.

Superintendent's Report

Goal #1 Student Achievement

- Update on Academic Instructional Support for Schools
  Dr. Stratos and her staff provided an Executive Summary and presentation on Academic Support for Schools.

Board Business

- OE6.1 – 6.8 Financial Administration
  Mrs. Tonya Crosby presented the Monitoring Report for OE6.1 – 6.8 Financial Administration.
  Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Board approves OE6.1 – 6.8 Financial Administration. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Elizabeth Hey. The motion passed 5/1. William Smith voted against the motion.

- OE13 Student Discipline
  Dr. Chad Cox presented the signed Monitoring Report for OE13 Student Discipline was presented to the Board for approval.
  Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Board approve OE13 Student Discipline. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr. The motion passed 5/1. William Smith voted against the motion.

- 2026 Board Meeting Calendar
  The 2026 Board Meeting Calendar that was reviewed at the Work Session was submitted for Board approval.
  Mr. William Smith made the motion that the Boad approve the 2026 Board Meeting Calendar. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr. The motion passed 6/0.

- Board Policy on Livestreaming
  Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Policy Committee recommends that the full Board of Education approves the livestreaming of Board Meetings policy and directs the Superintendent to forward the policy to the South Carolina Department of Education. The motion was seconded by Mr. William Smith. The motion passed 6/0.

- OE-3 Treatment of stakeholders
  Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Board approve OE3 Treatment of Stakeholders. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr. The motion passed 5/1. William Smith voted against the motion.

- OE-15 Safety and Security
  Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Board approve OE15, Safety and Security. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr. The motion passed 5/1. William Smith voted against the motion.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr. The motion passed 6/0.

Consent Agenda

- OE2- Superintendent Succession Planning
- OE4 – Personnel Administration
- OE7 – Asset Protection
- OE14 – Learning Environment/Treatment of Students
- OE1- Global Operations Expectation
- OE10- Communication with the Board
- OE11 – Communication with the Public
- October 7, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes
- October 21, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes
- November 4, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes
- November 21, 2025 Board Work Session Meeting Minutes

Public Comments

- James Miller, Bluffton spoke on the topic of band accountability.
- Rachel Martinez spoke on the topic of mental health support and resources for students in Bluffton schools.
- Anthony Cambria, Bluffton spoke on the topic Board Governance and Board actions.

Announcement

- Dr. Rodriguez announced that the Choice Booklets are available
- Choice Schools Showcase - November 13, 2025 at the Culinary Institute for Southern Beaufort County And November 15, 2025 at Robert Smalls Leadership Academy for Northern Beaufort County.

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 9:00pm

(Signature on Official File Copy) Date: February 3, 2026

Victor Ney, Secretary, Board of Education

Minutes prepared by Robyn Cushingberry, Executive Assistant

Motion Summary

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A motion was made to approve the agenda with the removal of OE3 and OE15 from the consent agenda and to be placed on Board Business Action. The motion was seconded and passed 7/0.

Colonel Geier did a role call for each member on whether to retain, restrict, and remove any of the books. The following results:

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- **Remove** – No one voted to have any of the books removed.

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A motion was made that the Board approve OE6.1 – 6.8 Financial Administration. The motion was seconded and passed 5/1. William Smith voted against the motion.

A motion was made that the Board approve OE13 Student Discipline. The motion was seconded and passed 5/1. William Smith voted against the motion.

A motion was made that the Boad approve the 2026 Board Meeting Calendar. The motion was seconded and passed 6/0.

A motion was made that the Policy Committee recommends that the full Board of Education approves the livestreaming of Board Meetings policy and direct the Superintendent to forward the policy to the South Carolina Department of Education. The motion was seconded and passed 6/0.

A motion was made that the Board approves OE3 Treatment of Stakeholders. The motion was seconded and passed 5/1. William Smith voted against the motion.

A motion was made that the Board approves OE15, Safety and Security. The motion was seconded and passed 5/1. William Smith voted against the motion.

A motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded and passed 6/0.

Consent Agenda

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