

Minutes of Barnwell County School District

Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

(770 Hagood Avenue, Barnwell, SC 29812)

Board Members Present: Becky Huggins, Felicia Devore, Rosey Anderson, John Melton, Jr.,
Catrena Hughes-Parker (not in attendance)

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.

Becky Huggins asked that the School of Choice Student C is added to New Business for approval after Executive Session.

B. Approval of Agenda – Becky Huggins

A motion was made by Rosey Anderson to approve the agenda as presented along with the addition of School of Choice Student C to New Business for approval after Executive Session. The motion was seconded by John Melton. Hearing no objections, the agenda was unanimously approved.

C. Approval of Consent Agenda Items – Becky Huggins

1. Approval of November 24, 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes
2. Approval of January Personnel Report
3. Approval of October Financial Report

The motion was made by Felicia Devore to approve the consent agenda items. The motion was seconded by Rosey Anderson. The motion was approved unanimously.

D. There was no public participation.

Dr. Stapleton stated that there were requests for public participation from the community, but they did not meet the criteria. She explained that Assistant Superintendent Franklin McCormack reached out to those individuals to explain the process and follow up with them.

II. Recognition- Superintendent

A. 2026 South Carolina School Board Recognition Month- Dr. Stapleton

Dr. Stapleton read SC Governor Henry McMaster's Proclamation as January being recognized as School Board Recognition Month. She stated that she would like to thank the school board for everything that they do for our school district. She explained that school board member Catrena Hughes-Parker was not in

attendance because she was on a school trip. Dr. Stapleton expressed gratitude to all board members on behalf of the entire school district, expressing how grateful the district is for their time, dedication, and commitment. She also shared that the difference they make is truly seen in the lives of our children throughout the district. Gifts were presented from the schools and the district office.

B. Signing of the Board of Trustees Ethical Principles- Dr. Stapleton

Dr. Stapleton explained that the South Carolina School Board Association has adopted the Ethical Principles for school board members to review and sign annually. Chair Becky Huggins read those, and the school board members signed them to show that they will uphold these ethical principles in all that they do.

Chair Becky Huggins also thanked everyone for their thoughtful recognitions during School Board Recognition Month and shared that it was truly appreciated.

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.

FEMA Gymnasium and Safe House Update

- We are still awaiting news on our Period of Performance Extension Request from FEMA.

Update on New High School

- Today, we held a follow-up interior finishes meeting to review and refine proposed interior selections based on input received from the countywide design and development team in December.
- HG Reynolds has advertised for bids for early site work. The bid date is scheduled for January 29, 2026.
- This includes Grading/Earthwork, Water, Sewer with Lift Station, Storm Drainage, Erosion control, Paving, Sidewalks, Fencing, and Landscaping.

B. School and District Updates

Dr. Stapleton shared the following school and district updates:

- Barnwell County School District is excited to announce the selection of its IT Apprentices for the 2025-2026 school year. These students are supporting technology operations across the district while gaining valuable hands-on experience. The selected apprentices and areas serve are:
 - Yug Patel- Williston Schools
 - Kimberly Cruz- Blackville Schools
 - Elijah Greene- Barnwell Schools
- Prior to the holiday break, Old Barnwell welcomed twenty student golfers from Barnwell County School District for a special event designed exclusively for the BCSD group. Old Barnwell's Director of Instruction, Pat Milkovich, led a focused golf clinic tailored specifically for the BCSD group. Following the clinic, students transitioned to play on the course then regrouped before leaving.
- The Barnwell County Career Center (BCCC) Future Farmers of America (FFA) Wildlife Team earned an impressive 3rd place finish at the South Carolina FFA State Wildlife Career Development Event (CDE)

- Representing BCCC in this year's Wildlife CDE were Davis Coble, Dottie Still, Jase Bridges, and Reese Yelton.
- The Barnwell County Career Center's Marketing Program had their Village Square Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on December 17, 2025.
 - Barnwell County Career Center celebrated the official launch of the *Village Square*, a student-led business project developed by the Entrepreneurship Class taught by Mrs. Natasha Broxton.
 - Students premiered a commercial they created, highlighting their businesses and marketing skills.
 - Students conducted individual ribbon cuttings for each business and shared their learning directly with attendees.
- Barnwell County School District Teacher Forum
 - Chairperson- Natasha Broxton
 - Vice-Chairperson- Dr. Supreethi Mukthipudi
- The BCSD Teacher Forum is aligned with South Carolina's Teacher Forum model and is composed of our 2025-2026 and 2024-2025 Teachers of the Year from each school across the district.
- At the state level, our current District Teacher of the Year serves as the district's representative to participate in the South Carolina Teacher Forum, thus helping ensure that Barnwell County also has a voice in statewide conversations about education.
- Rather than convening for a single initiative or decision, the Teacher Forum will remain a constant voice representing classrooms, schools, and students across Barnwell County.
- New PreK Class in Partnership with Barnwell County First Steps
 - Currently there are 17 students enrolled.
 - 12 three-year-olds
 - 5 four-year-olds
 - Students are learning through Montessori lessons while also using state approved Frog Street preschool curriculum.
 - A retired teacher has rejoined us to teach that class the remainder of the school year, giving the district more time to find a permanent teacher for that position.

IV. Old Business

V. New Business

- A. (Action) Motion made for the Approval of Blackville-Hilda High School Overnight Trip for the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) Organization to Spring Leadership Conferences in North Charleston March 18th through 20th- Becky Huggins

Motion made by Felicia Devore to approve the Blackville-Hilda High School Overnight Trip for Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) Organization to Spring Leadership Conference in North Charleston March 18th-20th. The motion was seconded by John Melton. The motion was approved unanimously.

- B. (Action) Motion made to approve the School of Choice Requests- Students A and B- Becky Huggins

Dr. Stapleton asked for approval for the School of Choice Requests for Students A and B. She explained that these were both requests that she discussed with the school board members before the holiday break

regarding children wishing to enroll in the new PreK program, but there was not a December meeting for an official vote to take place. Tonight's vote would make that official.

Motion made by John Melton to approve School of Choice Requests- Students A and B. The motion was seconded by Rosey Anderson. The motion was approved unanimously.

C. Approval of Out of District Request- Student A (following Executive Session)- Action Item

Dr. Stapleton explained that School Choice Request Student C will be voted on after Executive Session and noted that the vote for the Out of District Request for Student A will also take place after Executive Session.

D. (Action) Motion made for the approval of Continuous Improvement Plans for Macedonia Elementary/Middle School, Blackville-Hilda High School, and Guinyard-Butler Middle School- Becky Huggins

Dr. Stapleton shared the following information on Barnwell County School District's Strategic Planning:

- On Wednesday, January 14th, groups from across Barnwell County came together to officially kick off the district's strategic planning process.
- Principals are leading the planning efforts within their individual schools, while Assistant Superintendent Franklin McCormack is guiding the development of the district-level strategic plan.
- This structure ensures that planning remains both specific to our schools but also aligned with districtwide priorities. It ensures that decisions are aligned and efforts across our ten schools support a common vision.
- Rather than being a one-time event, strategic planning is an ongoing process that encourages reflection and continuous improvement.
- As part of this process, parents and community members will be hearing from their schools in the coming weeks as school teams seek input and feedback.
- In addition, the district will be gathering community input in a variety of ways to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented.
- While our direction as a district is unified, each school's plan may look different based on its strengths and challenges, thus allowing the school to focus on what their students need most.
- The South Carolina Continuous Improvement Model is intended to support schools and districts in developing and implementing a continuous, sustainable improvement model that supports student achievement at the highest levels.
- While we will bring the strategic plans to in the coming months, they will focus on the 2026-2027 school year.
- These plans this evening focus on action steps we are putting in place already to address areas of growth at the following locations:
 - Macedonia Elementary/Middle School
 - Blackville-Hilda High School
 - Guinyard-Butler Middle School

Motion made by Rosey Anderson for the approval of Continuous Improvement Plans for Macedonia Elementary/Middle School, Blackville-Hilda High School, and Guinyard-Butler Middle School. The motion was seconded by Felicia Devore. The motion was approved unanimously.

D. **Executive Session**

Motion made to go into Executive Session by Rosey Anderson at 6:31p.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 or the appointment of a person to a public body.

- *Discussion of Out of District Request- Student A*
- *School Choice Request- Student C*
- *Student Disciplinary Action*
- *Contractual Matters related to Employees following Letters of Intent*

Discussion of negotiations incident to contractual arrangements, specifically FEMA Safe Room and Hazard Mitigation Grant and ongoing process for planning and construction of the new high school/career center

Receipt of legal advice, as needed, in regard to contractual agreements

It was noted that any action that is required by Executive Session discussion will occur following the close of Executive Session.

Motion made to come out of Executive Session at 7:21 p.m. Motion made by Felicia Devore and seconded by Rosey Anderson. The motion was approved unanimously.

Motion made by Felicia Devore for the approval of School of Choice Requests: Student C. The motion was seconded by John Melton. The motion was approved unanimously.

Motion made by Rosey Anderson to deny Out of District- Student A due to class space. The motion was seconded by Felicia Devore. The motion was approved unanimously.

E. Adjournment

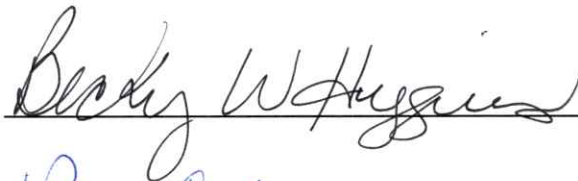
A. Announcement of Next Meeting

Regular Board Meeting scheduled for February 24, 2026 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 John Melton and seconded by Felicia Devore. There were no objections to adjourning. The meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Chair



Clerk

