School Governance Council

MEETING MINUTES

September 24, 2025, 6:00 PM, Microsoft Teams

SGC MEMBERS PRESENT: John D. Young (Chair) | Karissa Reid (Vice Chair) | Breyuana Walker | Fawn Bell-Palmer | Alicia Clemmons | Joaquin Knight | Arnisha Canty (Principal)

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Young called the meeting to order.

A motion to adopt the agenda was made and received general consent from the members present. There being no corrections, the agenda was adopted.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Mr. Young noted that the previous meeting minutes had been emailed to all members.

- Motion to receive the minutes as information: Ms. BellPalmer
- Second: Mr. Knight
- Hearing no corrections or unreadiness, the minutes were accepted as information.

PRINCIPAL UPDATES (Ms. Canty)

Ms. Canty provided a comprehensive update on school activities and operations:

Family & Community Engagement

- **Grandparents Day**: Held approximately 1.5 weeks prior. Sold-out event with 215 grandparents in attendance.
- **Title I Night**: Reviewed Title I data and goals for the school year. Highest parent attendance in her four years at Cliftondale.
- **Curriculum Night**: Teachers provided parents with an overview of grade-level expectations. Strong turnout, significantly higher than in previous years.
- **PTA Meeting**: Successful event with strong parent participation and new ideas shared. Current PTA officers will roll off at the end of this year; PTA leadership elections will occur in the spring.

Instruction & Achievement

- **Instructional Rounds**: ELA Director visited and conducted instructional walks in ELA classrooms. Quality of instruction was described as “top tier.” District has requested to video several teachers as exemplars for Fulton County Schools.

- **Enrollment & Staffing**: Current enrollment: 687 students. One vacant position: additional TAG teacher (3 days/week) to support growth in TAG-identified and high-potential students.

STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW

Ms. Canty reviewed the district and **school-level strategic planning framework**:

- Fulton County vision, mission, and core values (Integrity, Accountability, Teamwork).
- Six overarching district goals, with emphasis for Cliftondale on:
    - Enhancing performance for all students.
    - Prioritizing safety and operational efficiency.
    - Ensuring impact for programming.
    - Strengthening employee engagement.
    - Utilizing fiscal resources effectively.
    - Deepening community connections.

She then reviewed Cliftondale's FY26 performance targets, building on FY25 results:

Academic Performance

- Reading (Milestones – At/Above Grade Level):
    - FY25 Actual: 69.6% (~70%).
    - FY26 Target: 75% (5% increase).
    - Long-term district goal: 80%.
- Math (Milestones – Proficient/Distinguished):
    - FY25 Actual: 45%.
    - FY26 Target: 50% (Level 3 or 4).
    - Long-term district goal: 80%.

Discipline & Safety

- In-School Suspension (ISS) and Out-of-School Suspension (OSS):
    - FY25: Reduced OSS/ISS days by 10.
    - FY26 Target: 27 total days or fewer.
    - Ongoing emphasis on restorative practices and supportive discipline.

Special Populations

- SCC (Special Needs) Students – Reading:
    - FY25: 27% meeting the reading indicator (at/above grade level on Milestones).
    - FY26 Target: 32%.

Employee Engagement

- Employee Retention:
  - FY25 goal: 100% retention; actual included four staff departures (retirement, resignation, transfers).
  - FY26: Original proposed goal was 100%. Mr. Young recommended adjusting to 90–95% to reflect the reality that some staff transitions are appropriate and healthy for school culture.
  - Ms. Canty agreed to take this recommendation to the Zone Superintendent for consideration.

Charter Dollars & Attendance

- Charter Dollars:
  - FY25 goal: 100% of charter dollars spent in alignment with school goals.
  - FY25 actual: 100% spent.
  - FY26 goal: Continue to fully expend $30,000 allocation in support of school priorities.
- Student Attendance:
  - Chronic absenteeism has decreased from 12% to 10% over three years.
  - FY26 Target: Increase students with satisfactory attendance from 81.7% to 84.15%.
  - Strategies: Monthly "Attendance Dance Party" celebrations and spirit weeks; ongoing incentives for students and staff.

Ms. Canty emphasized that all FY26 goals are currently in **draft** status pending SGC approval and final review by the Zone Superintendent (Mr. Maxwell). The Superintendent may request adjustments to specific performance targets (e.g., raising reading goals to 80%).

DISCUSSION & ADOPTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN

Mr. Young affirmed that the strategic goals align with the school's direction and district expectations, reiterating his concern only about the 100% employee retention target. Ms. Clemmons and Ms. Bell-Palmer both expressed support for the goals and agreement with Mr. Young's comments on retention.

Motion: Motion to adopt the Cliftondale Strategic Plan and performance goals, with any necessary corrections/adjustments following Zone Superintendent review: Ms. Clemmons. Seconds: Ms. Reid, Mr. Knight, and Ms. Hightower indicated support. Vote: **Motion carried by majority** (thumbs up/visual vote). The SGC formally adopted the strategic plan in draft form, authorizing Ms. Canty to submit it to the Zone Superintendent and adjust only as required by the district.

CHARTER DOLLAR EXPENDITURE PROPOSALS

Mr. Young and Ms. Canty presented proposed uses of FY26 charter funds (total allocation: $30,000). The proposal brought forward for vote totaled approximately **$20,000**, with **$10,000 reserved** for future SGC initiatives aligned to strategic goals.

Proposed Expenditures

1. **PBIS Store / Mustang Must Incentives**
    - Purpose: Support positive behavior and safety goals (Prioritizing Safety & Operational Efficiency).
    - Use: Student incentives and items for the PBIS store.
2. **Learning A–Z / RAZ Kids Subscription**
    - Purpose: Enhance literacy instruction and resources aligned to the science of reading; supports "Enhancing Performance for All Students."
    - Estimated Cost: Approximately $8,860 (budgeted at $9,000 pending updated quote).
3. **Beta Club Competition Support**
    - Purpose: Fund state and national Beta Club competitions (registration and transportation).
    - Prior Year Support: $7,400.
    - FY26 Request: $5,000.
4. **Club Sponsor Supplements**
    - Purpose: Provide supplemental stipends for teachers leading extracurricular clubs (Beta, Art, Science Olympiad, Girls Are Real, Drama Club, and others).
    - Prior Year SGC Support: Approximately $15,000.
    - FY26 Request: $5,000.
    - Ms. Canty confirmed she has also budgeted for some club supplements within the school's operating budget, and SGC funds will cover the additional clubs beyond what the school budget can support.

Mr. Young clarified: Remaining $10,000 in charter funds will be reserved for additional proposals that support strategic goals (e.g., Math Bee, transportation for grade-level trips, other school-wide initiatives). Transportation for field trips has already been budgeted at $10,000 in the general school budget; unused buses can be reassigned to other grade levels as needed.

Motion: The body opted to vote on charter allocations **in totality** rather than line-by-line. Motion to approve the charter dollar expenditure plan as presented (approximately $20,000) and reserve the remaining $10,000 for future SGC-approved initiatives: made verbally (support expressed by multiple members including Ms. Bell-Palmer). Vote: Motion carried by majority (thumbs up/visual vote).

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Mr. Young returned to the earlier agenda item on standing committees and confirmed membership:

Budget & Finance Committee: John D. Young (Chair); Karissa Reid; Fawn Bell-Palmer; Brianna Houston (Representing PTA)

Outreach & Communications Committee: Brianna Walker; Jocelyn Josey; Alicia Clemmons; Joshua Martinez

Notes:

- Budget & Finance will meet as needed to review financial items and charter funding.
- Outreach & Communications will lead communications on strategic goals, SGC elections, surveys, and family engagement messaging.

Superintendent Advisory Council and leadership development sessions are forthcoming; Mr. Young is registered for the October 4 session at the district office. A south-side training is also scheduled for September 29.

Mr. Young also noted that SGC minutes and documents are in the process of being uploaded to the website by the school webmaster (Ms. Houston), and that full compliance should be achieved within the next two weeks.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Ms. Canty shared key upcoming events:

- **District 4 Community Meeting with Ms. Francesca Warren** October 20, 5:30 PM, Cliftondale Elementary. SGC members are encouraged to attend and ensure strong school representation.
- **Trunk or Treat with Math Night "Twist"**: Annual Trunk or Treat event combined with required Title I Math event. School is seeking candy donations from families and community partners.

NEXT MEETING

Next regular SGC meeting date to follow the established schedule. Focus at subsequent meetings will include monitoring of strategic goals and any additional charter proposals.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

- Motion to adjourn: Ms. Clemmons. Second: Ms. Bell-Palmer. Meeting adjourned 6:45PM.