BEAUFORT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
School Board Meeting Minutes
May 19, 2026
Hilton Head Island Middle School

Members Presents

Carlton Dallas, Chair	Ingrid Boatright	Richard Geier
David Carr, Vice Chair	Isaac Gordon	Christina Gwozdz
Victor Ney, Secretary	Elizabeth Hey	Alphonso Small
	William Smith	

Members Absent
Chloe Gordon

Mr. Carlton Dallas called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr with the removal of the Academic Committee Report. The motion passed 8/0. Isaac Gordon was absent from the vote. Chloe Gordon was absent from the meeting.

Swearing-In for new Board Member – Attorney Rebecca H. Hale, Esquire of Hale & Hale, P.A. presided over the swearing-in of Dr. Christina Gwozdz for District 9 seat.

Public Comments – No Comments during the first period.

Chair's Report - Mr. Dallas discussed upcoming graduations and the district's efforts to make them more accessible to families. He also provided an update on AI initiatives, noting that the district is working to integrate IA into curriculum while protecting systems and students.

Board Business Action

- **2026 – 2027 Budget Certification**
  Mrs. Tonya Crosby presented the final 2026-2027 Budget for Certification.

  Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Beaufort County Board of Education approve and certify the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 General Fund Budget in the amount of $395,321,600 with an operations millage rate of 126.mills. The motion was seconded by Dr. Christina Gwozdz. The motion passed 10/0.

  Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Beaufort County Board of Education approve and certify the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Debt Service Fund Budget in the amount of $120,907,292 with a debt service millage rate of 36.3 mills. The motion was seconded by Dr. Christina Gwozdz. The motion passed 10/0.

Committee Reports

Operations Committee: Victor Ney, chair provided an update from May 12, 2026 Operations Committee. He updated the Board on the referendum projects, the community outreach programs and provided an update on the monthly maintenance and custodial report. Mr. Ney invited Mrs. Jennifer Barefield from Pritchardville Elementary to talk about the new Bluffton Early Childhood Center School Naming Committee. Mrs. Barefield shared who was on the committee, and the process that the committee went through.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Board of Education approve the name Palmetto Early Childhood Center with the school colors Light Blue and Grey and a Pelican Mascot. The motion was seconded by Mr. William Smith. The motion passed 10/0.

Mr. Ney shared provided the background information on Pritchard St. Temporary Easement Agreement.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent to finalize the Amended Streetscape Easement associated with the Pritchard Street Easement Agreement with the Town of Bluffton. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingrid Boatright. The motion passed 9/0/1. Christina Gwozdz abstained from the vote.

Mr. Ney provided an update on the Review of Options for the FY28% Funding for Capital Improvement Projects and the recommendation from the Operations committee. Mrs. Boatright proposed a review of the current process for project selection.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Board of Education accept the recommendation from the Operations Committee Option 5B in the amount of $36,831,000 as the final list of Capital Improvement Projects for FY28 8% Funding approval. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr. The motion passed 9/1. Issac Gordon voted against the motion.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion that the Board of Education direct the Operations Committee at its next meeting to begin to review this process and bring a recommendation back to the Board. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Elizabeth Hey. The motion passed 9/1. William Smith voted against the motion.

Mr. Victor Ney presented the recommended Student Assignment Option from the Operations Committee.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Board of Education accept the recommendation from the Operations Committee Option 2 for public review and comments and accept the amended student Assignment timeline. The motion was seconded by Dr. David Carr. The motion passed 10/0.

Superintendent's Report

Goal #1 Student Achievement

- CTE & Workforce Development
  Mrs. Karen Gilbert presented updates on new state pathways frameworks and stackable credentials. The presentation included updates on successful health sciences programs and partnership with local hospitals, as well as plans for modernizing and expanding technical facilities through upcoming construction projects at Beaufort and Bluffton High School.

Goal #3 Fiscal Responsibility

Student Performance: M.C. Riley Elementary School small group performance under the direction of Dr. Melanie Nolan.

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

- Student of the Month for Southern BCSD
  - March – May River High School 11th grade student Natalya Huggins
  - April – M.C. Riley Elementary 1st grade student Jai'ari Pitts
- South Carolina Music Education Association Solo/Ensemble Festival
- SC Work Based Learning Student of the Year
- Premier Community Theater Education Award
- TOY & SOYs

Other Matters

- Beaufort Community Partnership Update.
  Colonel Geier provided an update on the Beaufort Community Partnership, which is working to establish itself as a non-profit organization dedicated to closing educational opportunity gaps in the Beaufort County, with early childhood education being a key focus area.

Future Topics – N/A

Announcement

- Mr. William Smith announced that the CinderFella Ball was a wonderful event.
- Mr. Dallas shared more information that he and Mr. Smith attended. It was a partnership event where seven to ten organizations were promoting their services to the community with student services staff and other members of the district also participated. It was very informative.

Public Comments

- James Miller, spoke on the division of power between the schools and the district office.

Executive Session

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussion of Personnel matter re: employment, appointment, promotion, compensation; pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. section 30-4-70(a)(1); receipt of legal advice regarding the Port Royal MCIP covered by the attorney client privilege pursuant to S.C. code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); discussion of negotiations incident to proposed Amendment #19 with Thompson Turner Construction of the new BHS Career and Technical Education (CTE) Building 2023 Referendum Scope Guaranteed maximum Price (GMP) Proposal pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); discussion of negotiations incident to proposed Amendment #01 with Thompson Turner construction for Riverview Charter School (RVCS) Gym Addition and Renovations scope of work Guaranteed maximum Price (GMP) proposal pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2). The motion was seconded by Mr. William Smith. The motion passed 10/0.

The Board moved into Executive Session at 7:15pm.

Action from Executive Session

Mr. Dallas called the meeting back to open session at 8:38p.m.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Board of Education formally states its non-support of the proposed MCIP Multi County Industrial Park with the Town of Port Royal. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alphonso Small. The motion passed 10/0.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Board of Education accept the Superintendent's recommendation to employ Staci Souhan as principal of Hilton Head Island School for the Creative Arts. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Elizabeth Hey. The motion passed 10/0.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Board of Education approve Amendment #19 with Thompson Turner Construction for the Beaufort High School new career and technical education (CTE) Building scope of work with a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) of $5,348,711 using 2023 Bond Referendum funds. The motion was seconded by Mr. William Smith. The motion passed 10/0.

Mr. Victor Ney made the motion that the Board of Education approve Amendment #01 with Thompson Turner Construction for the Riverview Charter School (RVCS) Gym Addition & Renovations based on the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) of $12,322,679. The motion was seconded by Mr. William Smith. The motion passed 10/0.

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent.

The meeting adjourned at 8:41pm.

(Signature on Official File Copy) Date: June 23, 2026
Victor Ney, Secretary, Board of Education
Minutes prepared by Robyn Cushingberry, Executive Assistant

Motion Summary

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