Brennen Elementary SIC Meeting Minutes – October 13, 2026

The Brennen Elementary School Improvement Council met Tuesday, October 13, 2026, from 5:30 to 6:30 PM in the school library. Chair Mike Harmon presided; the council voted to pursue the Dick and Tunky Riley Award and formed a Riley committee.

In attendance: Michael Sheley, Caison Boozer, Beth Moore, Jake Chapiesky, Amy Weaver, Mike Harmon, Caroline McManus Easley, Ajeet Roy, Kimberly McIntee, Tiffany Ligon

1. Opening remarks (Mike Harmon, Chair)

Mike Harmon called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM and asked all members to sign in.

- **Bylaws amendment:** The bylaws were amended to move the deadline for nominating elected and appointed members from August 31 to September 30. Under this timeline, Amy Weaver and Kendra Myers were elected at the September meeting.

Approval of minutes. A motion was made and seconded to approve the September minutes, incorporating edits submitted by Stephanie Blackmon. The motion passed.

2. Principal's report (Tiffany Ligon)

- **Superheroes theme week:** Students welcomed real-life "superheroes" — police, emergency services and service dogs, service members, USC athletes (swimming, women's golf) and A.C. Flora athletes — during lunches and in classes. The week included the Walk for Life honoring those affected by breast cancer.
- **Growing Together Night (September 22):** Held in place of a traditional open house. Families gave strong positive feedback on the resources and hands-on learning they could take home.
- **Testing:** CogAT for 2nd graders is this week; the first state practice exam is in November.
- **i-Ready consultant:** A consultant will visit 3–5 times this year (next visit next week) to help staff use i-Ready reports, align them with SC READY, and set student stretch goals.
- **SC READY perfect scores:** 16 students earned perfect scores, up from 6 last year. The district visited to celebrate them, and they will be recognized at the next school board meeting.

- **School Report Card:** Brennen received an overall rating of Good (59 points; 61 needed for Excellent), down from Excellent the prior year. Scores improved in school climate and in the multilingual learner (ML) indicator (about 8 points).
- **Area of focus:** The gap is in student progress, especially growth among students in the lowest 20th percentile. Teachers began studying the data after school today.
- **Demographics:** The pupil poverty rate is about 38–39% (43% last year). The ML population remains significant, down from about 150 families three years ago to just under 100 last year.
- **Palmetto's Finest:** A team of about 12 teachers completed and submitted the application. If Brennen is not selected, the school will revise and reapply.

Members asked to learn more about how the report card is calculated and thanked the faculty for their hard work and high standards.

3. PTO report (Caison Boozer)

- **Color Run (October 23):** First runs begin at 8:30 AM; the rain date is Monday, October 26. Volunteer slots remain open on SignUp Genius. To date $46,880 has been raised, slightly ahead of last year. Grade-level challenges are underway (extra PE, sit-anywhere lunch, no homework for a week), and a car-rider change collection is tomorrow at 7:00 AM. Mike Harmon will again serve as emcee.
- **Internet Safety (September 29):** The SC Attorney General's office presented to every grade level, and students connected the message to their families' online rules. About 10 adults attended the interactive evening parent session.
- **Movie Night (November 2):** Free pizza and water, with popcorn, hot chocolate, cookies, Kona Ice, and spirit wear for sale. Volunteers are needed. There is no school November 3 (Election Day).
- **Use of excess funds:** PTO is meeting with each grade-level team (four this Friday, the rest the week of Halloween) to fund "extras" that enhance learning, such as the 4th grade graphic-novel author visit and last year's OG books for K–2. The PE department is discussing a mini disc golf course. Teachers outside grade-level teams will be included. PTO will report back in November.
- **Vision screening device:** Following the September vote, PTO purchased the device for the school nurse. She can now screen many more students quickly without borrowing the district's device, and screenings have already led to important referrals.

4. SIC initiatives for 2026–2027 (Mike Harmon)

Vote to pursue the Riley Award. Mike Harmon moved that the SIC pursue the 2026 Dick and Tunky Riley Award and submit its intent to apply. The motion was seconded, and passed with no opposition.

Riley committee. A motion was made to form a Riley committee led by Stephanie Blackmon, who has served on the SIC in previous years. She will work with Beth Moore, who is also willing to serve. The motion was seconded and passed. Other members are welcome to join.

- **Intent to apply:** To be submitted in the next few days; Principal Ligon will submit the names of current SIC members.
- **Round 1 (due November 20):** A pass/fail compliance review submitted through an online portal. It includes the SIC bylaws, last year's agendas and minutes (already posted), the School Report Card narrative (Principal Ligon), and a one-page SIC project summary. Mike will send a draft of the summary a few days before the November 10 meeting for review and a vote.
- **Round 2:** Qualifiers are notified December 4; statements are due February 19. The goal is a strong draft by the February SIC meeting.
- **Proposed focus:** Go deep on two areas rather than wide, centered on the annual report and survey, showing that the SIC listened to families and students and acted. Examples include Paw Pals, student leadership pathways, the expanded Career Day, and community visibility and communication. The application can show progress from 2025 into 2026.
- **SC-SIC Connect Dinner (October 22, Lexington):** Open to all SIC members; registration is still open. Attendees can ask Riley Award questions, such as formatting requirements.

5. Faculty and community updates (Caroline McManus Easley)

Stephanie Blackmon was absent; Caroline McManus Easley shared faculty updates.

- **Teacher updates:** PTO has reached out to team leads about grade-level funding. Other faculty items were covered in earlier reports.
- **5th grade legacy projects:** No update this month.
- **Summer workbook packets:** A parent shared that the district-provided summer workbook bundles were hard to use and largely went unused. Members felt the

resources could be better repurposed, such as a simpler end-of-year reflection workbook. Principal Ligon welcomed the feedback and will review the materials with the parents.

- **5th grade bathroom dividers:** A request from last year's student survey, dividers between urinals in the 5th grade bathroom, was not completed in the renovation. Principal Ligon will email Mr. Henry, as the dividers may have been missed. If district funds are unavailable, PTO funds could be considered.

6. Action items

- Principal Ligon and Mike Harmon: submit the Riley Award intent to apply with current SIC member names
- Mike Harmon: notify Stephanie Blackmon of her appointment as Riley committee lead
- Riley committee and Mike Harmon: draft the one-page SIC project summary and send it to members before November 10
- Riley committee and Principal Ligon: compile Round 1 documents and the School Report Card narrative by November 20
- Principal Ligon: email Mr. Henry about the 5th grade bathroom dividers
- PTO: meet with grade-level teams on funding and report back in November
- Mike Harmon and Amy Weaver: prepare draft minutes for review by Jake and Beth Moore
- All members: confirm attendance on the sign-in sheet for compliance records

7. Next meeting and adjournment

These minutes will be voted on and approved at the next meeting and then posted on the Brennen website, as state standards require. The next SIC meeting is **Tuesday, November 10, 2026, 5:30–6:30 PM**. Meetings are open to parents and community members.

Mike Harmon adjourned the meeting.