

Minutes of Barnwell County School District Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, October 24, 2023
(770 Hagood Avenue, Barnwell, SC 29812)

Board Members Present: Chairperson Terry Richardson, Ronnie Brown, Becky Huggins, SGM Abraham Sexton, and Dr. Andy Sandifer

I. Opening Business

A. Call to Order, Reflection, Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, FOI Notice

Chair Richardson called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. SGM Abraham Sexton led the Reflection and the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Chair Richardson confirmed the FOI Notice, as required by the Freedom of Information Act.

B. Approval of Agenda – Chair Terry Richardson

A motion was made by Dr. Andy Sandifer to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton. Hearing no objections, the agenda was unanimously approved.

Chair Richardson announced that Mr. Ronald Brown, Member was noticeably absent due to a flat tire so there's no questions about his empty seat.

C. Approval of September 26, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes – Chair Terry Richardson

Chairperson Richardson asked for a motion to approve the September 26, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes. Becky Huggins made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. SGM Abraham Sexton seconded the motion. The minutes were presented unanimously.

II. Superintendent Report – Dr. Crystal Stapleton

A. Overview from Board Work Session

Superintendent Stapleton thanked the board members for attending the work session from earlier and she realized it was a long day with the exception of a short break. She shared she was very appreciative of their time. She also provided an overview from the work session, including how the board members looked more in-depth at the Phase 1 Salary Schedule study and analyzing data such as ACT, SAT, Graduation Rate, and College and Career Assessment. She also referenced how the topic of school of choice came up and told board members she would follow up on those discussions and bring more information next month.

Chair Richardson acknowledged the great job that Superintendent Stapleton did earlier in the day at the work session. He expressed appreciation that board members "covered a lot of ground." He also asked Superintendent Stapleton to explain school of choice to everyone.

Dr. Stapleton explained that one of the things discussed during the work session was school of choice and how she will create a team that will come with proposed guidelines if we are going to have that in place and a model policy in the future that we will look to follow. At this time, she explained that it's just about bringing information to the board members to see if there's an interest in moving forward and make sure we have it well planned out before anything is determined.

B. Report on Facility Study

Superintendent Stapleton explained a large portion of the work session focused on the facility study report. She explained that M.B. Khan and SSOE shared findings regarding the facilities countywide, but now the engineers and architects will be able to take the information from today and the questions asked to create a finalized report that has additional information that board members requested.

C. September Financial Report

The \$3.125 million dollar consolidation budget spending thus far has come from board travel and compensation, and some technology funds. She explained that the district will receive the first 25 percent of the funding in November, and the new district will continue moving forward to spend the consolidation money on the items that the board members approved within the consolidation plan.

D. Update of the Strategic Planning Process for New District

Superintendent Stapleton explained that she met with small groups to talk about the planning as we move forward. She shared that she has recently met with Special Education Directors to look at the needs across the county, the caseloads, and the staff the districts currently have in order to move forward. In an effort to be proactive, she also shared that there are some positions already being advertised for the new district, because they are currently open in areas of the county. She also shared that the districts' Special Education leaders are planning to put a task force in place to look at curriculum and programs currently being used countywide.

She also explained how she met with the CFOs to discuss policies and procedures that are in place, as well as high school principals to discuss programming currently in place. There will continue to be meetings in November before the next board meeting. Some are already scheduled and some have to be planned.

Please note: Dr. Stapleton acknowledged Mr. Ronald Brown arriving. Everyone had been made aware that he was running late due to car trouble.

E. Update related to Consolidation Plan

Superintendent Stapleton shared updates regarding the Barnwell County School District.

- BCSD 01 (that's how the state refers to the new district) has been set up in the State Department's Application Web Portal and CFO Holly Hutto has been set up as the Web Access Coordinator (WAC). This portal holds most of the applications that the district is required to maintain for the state department.
- BCSD has entered into a contract with Harris School Solutions to begin the work to integrate the accounting software that both the districts currently use.
- CFO Holly Hutto has met with the Division of Procurement Services representative and has begun the editing process of the 2021 Model Code. Once the draft is complete, it will be available for review before it is submitted to the State Fiscal Accountability Authority (SFAA) for approval.
- CFO Holly Hutto has begun conversations with South Carolina School Boards Insurance Trust (SCSBIT) for a quote for Worker's Compensation Insurance. Both districts currently use SCSBIT for Workers Comp. Because the districts use two different companies for property and casualty insurance, Holly is requesting a quote from both companies for that coverage.
- The salary study will now continue with Phase 2, which will be presented at the November board meeting.

Dr. Andy Sandifer thanked Superintendent Stapleton for meeting with all the personnel. He said he appreciated it, and he's sure they did, too.

Chair Richardson thanked Mr. Corder and the boards from other districts for all their hard work and cooperation.

Superintendent Stapleton explained that the meetings are so important to set the new district in the right direction. Dr. Andy Sandifer expressed his appreciation because he knows it's very time consuming.

F. Presentation of Mental Health Initiatives Countywide

Superintendent Stapleton explained the districts' current partnerships with Aiken-Barnwell Mental Health (ABMH). This including explaining the onsite service provided by mental health clinicians, working with students and building relationships with personnel and students, the collaborative relationship ABMH has with the Guidance Counselors and Administrators. She also explained in-depth the services provided and how ABMH, specifically Lacinda McCormack, is supportive and quick to respond to crisis. Students that receive services also have access to family therapy and peer coordination.

- Provide Onsite Services: Clinicians are in the schools actively building relationships with school personnel and students. They feel collaboration with guidance counselors, teachers

and administration is key to obtaining vital information related to patient's care. They also offer clinic-based services and telehealth to meet the needs of patients and families.

- SMH staff can respond to the psychiatric crisis more quickly than Mobile Crisis.
- Students receiving services from ABMHC have access to other services as appropriate: Multi-Dimensional Family Therapy (MDFT) Program, Care Coordination. Our MDFT Clinician has provided services to students at schools in Barnwell County.
- ABMHC employs a very knowledgeable and very skilled Child, Adolescent and Family Psychiatrist- Dr. Gretchen Enright.
- ABMHC/SCDMH is facilitating a Pediatric Access Grant in Barnwell County which enhances access to care and provides consultation to primary care providers/pediatricians. Our psychiatrist consults with student's primary care providers.
- ABMHC staff meet with DJJ, DSS and other community partners on a regular basis to coordinate care for patients. They have established relationships with these partners.
- The school-mental health counselors assist the school in times of crisis or loss. School Mental Health Clinicians are trained in multiple evidence-based practices: ASIST (Suicide Prevention); TF-CBT, EMDR, CBT, and more. SCDMH/ABMHC is committed to providing on-going training and supervision for our staff.
- Lacinda McCormack has provided training to school staff on mental wellness, mental health, and suicide prevention.
- School Mental Health Staff are readily available to participate in Meet the Teacher, Open House, and School Events.
- Safuwra Hart – School Mental Health Liaison
 - Ms. Hart is designated the central point of contact for all referrals. Upon receipt of referral, she contacts parents to discuss services, conduct patient registration, and set up appointments with the therapist.
 - Ms. Hart is also available to provide psychosocial rehabilitation services (individual or group) to students. She targets the following: coping skills, communication skills, social skills, problem solving skills, and decision-making skills. (Currently serving 11 students at Macedonia, Barnwell Primary, GBMS, and BHS)
- In FY24, four staff members are providing services to students: Mallory Metts, Lacinda McCormack, Safuwra Hart and Bailey Brown. Bailey was hired on 8/17/2023.
 - Interviews are being conducted for remaining vacancies.
 - Mrs. McCormack continues to assist and see patients until vacancies are filled. However, at this time, the current staff members are not at full capacity for caseload.
- Superintendent Stapleton shared the data of the number of students being served. She also provided board members with a breakdown by school countywide.
 - (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023) 77 total students (All of Barnwell County), 621 total

contacts provided to students (All of Barnwell County), 104 total referrals

- o (July 1, 2023-present date) Active Patients at schools Total= 54 [For a reference, ABMH predicts, based on research and data analysis, 153 students could use mental health services.], New Referrals FY 24 Total=39

Mr. Ronnie Brown asked if Special Education has a relationship with Mental Health or training. Dr. Stapleton explained that Mrs. Lucinda McCormack has always been very helpful with training, and, if the students have needs, we have several agencies in place to help.

Dr. Andy Sandifer asked if all staff is allowed to make a referral. Superintendent Stapleton explained that all staff is allowed to make a referral, but they go through the guidance counselor at the respective school.

III. Old Business

IV. New Business

- A. Approval of Phase I of Salary Schedules- Action Item

Superintendent requested approval of the salary schedules presented during the work session, which included teachers, bus drivers, nurses, and custodians.

(Action) A motion was made by Dr. Andy Sandifer to approve Phase I of Salary Schedule as presented. The motion was seconded by Becky Huggins. It was approved unanimously.

V. Executive Session

There was no need for Executive Session.

VI. Adjournment

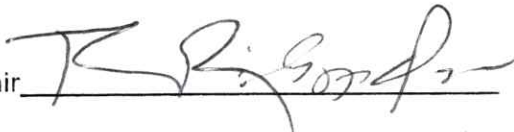
- A. Announcement of Next Meeting

Chair Richardson announced that the next meeting will be held on November 28, 2023 at the Barnwell County Career Center.

- B. Meeting Adjournment

Chair Richardson asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Dr. Andy Sandifer and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton. There were no objections to adjourning. The meeting adjourned at 6:34 pm.

Chair



Clerk

