

## Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Barnwell School District 45 Board of Trustees

**TIME:** 6:00 p.m., Thursday, November 9, 2023

**PLACE:** Barnwell Schools Administration Building, 770 Hagood Avenue, Barnwell, SC 29812 for Board Members

**PRESENT:**

**Board of Trustees:** Rosey Anderson, Chair; Felicia Devore, Vice-chair; Dr. Rhett Richardson, Clerk

**District Office:** Crystal Stapleton, Superintendent; Tina Smith, Administrative Assistant; Connie Jackson, Partner, Halligan, Mahoney & Williams, Kelly Shealy, Curriculum Support Coach; Holly Hutto, CFO; John Moody, IT Director

The agenda for the meeting was as follows:

### I. OPENING BUSINESS

- A. Chair Rosey Anderson called the meeting to order. Chair Rosey Anderson delivered the reflection. Dr. Rhett Richardson led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Superintendent Stapleton announced that local media had received notice of the meeting as required by the Freedom of Information Act.
- B. The Board unanimously approved the agenda. Motion was made by Felicia Devore and seconded by Dr. Rhett Richardson.
- C. The Board unanimously approved the consent agenda items. Motion made by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by Felicia Devore.
- D. There was no hearing of the public.

### II. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

#### A. Recognition

1. Superintendent Stapleton recognized School Resource Officers:

*Our School Resource Officers fulfill so many roles within our schools: Preventing and responding to school-based issues; fostering positive relationships among law enforcement, educators, and youth; and helping to promote a positive school climate. The SROs at each of our schools assist the school administration in maintaining a safe and secure environment. School administrators benefit from the SRO's training, knowledge, and experience in handling situations. We are so fortunate in Barnwell School District 45 to have amazing School Resource Officers.*

Superintendent Stapleton began the recognition tonight by recognizing Sergeant Greg Gantt. She shared,

*Sgt. Gantt recently retired from the Barnwell County Sheriff's Department. I know I speak on behalf of the entire district when I say what an important part of our district operations he was during his time here. I can't count the number of times either Rachel or I would call him to ask a question and get his advice on a situation.*

Mr. McCormack could not be here tonight, so Superintendent Stapleton shared a few words on behalf of Principal McCormack regarding Sgt. Gantt.

*Greg Gantt has been working in law enforcement for over 25 years, most of which have been in our schools. We have been working together for 14 years, and I've discovered a couple of things about him: he loves golf, he loves Barnwell, he's a great husband, he's a great father, but most importantly, he's always right. All jokes aside, Greg and I are not just colleagues. I've known him for a long time, even before we were working in the education profession. BHS loves you, and we are not saying goodbye. The high school wishes you well on the "back nine" of your life!"*

Superintendent Stapleton said she agreed with Mr. McCormack that we are so fortunate to have had Sgt. Gantt as a part of our district family and emphasized how he will be dearly missed. She also presented Sgt. Gantt with a plaque and gift.

Board members were given an opportunity to share their sentiments. Board member sentiments included:

*Richardson- Gregg Gantt is an amazing person and has an amazing wife. We have served on several committees out of the school district. His children are so smart. He will be solely missed but I'm sure I will see him around and on the golf course.*



*Devore- Thank you, Gregg, for all you've done. I have been able to see you quite a bit throughout the years that you have been here. Continue to enjoy your retirement.*

*Anderson- During my years with the district, I have had to have Gregg's help a time or two at BHS. I'm not sure if we'll be able to replace him because they will be big shoes to fill.*

Superintendent Stapleton then asked Sergeant (Chief) John Holston to come forward and introduce our current SRO staff, including some new officers who recently joined our team.

Following introductions, Superintendent Stapleton shared that the district is so grateful that Sgt. Holston has stepped into the leadership role for the SROs in our district. On behalf of our school district, she thanked them for all they do every day and emphasized what an important part of the BSD45 family they truly are, as well as shared a small token of appreciation with each officer.

- *Ms. Selvey shared, "Officer Gunnells jumped right into her role as our SRO getting to know our staff & children. She's highly visible & making connections with our families. She doesn't hesitate to get involved and is already proving to be such a valuable resource."*
- *Ms. Gooding shared, "Officer Thompson plays a vital role in fostering a safe and secure learning environment at Barnwell Elementary School. He arrives at school by 6:30 AM each morning and surveys out campus before students arrive. His dedication to building positive relationships with our students contributes to our welcoming atmosphere. He teaches our DARE program for our fifth graders, engages with our students throughout the day in the hallways and at lunch and is committed to ensuring the well-being of all in our school community. BES is honored to have him as a member of our family."*
- *Ms. Williams shared, "Officer Holston is an important member of the GBMS family. Our students trust him and respect him. He is a great role model, and he is willing to help us in any way to provide a positive, safe learning environment for children."*

### **III. New Business**

#### **A. Actions**

##### **1. Approval of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Washington DC Field Experience**

Superintendent Stapleton presented the request for approval of the GBMS 7<sup>th</sup> grade Washington, DC field experience. She explained that this is a trip that we do annually at GBMS with our 7<sup>th</sup> grade students, and we look forward each year to providing our students with this wonderful opportunity. Motion approved by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by Felicia Devore. (Approved unanimously)

##### **2. Approval of a Date Change to the BHS Peru Trip**

Superintendent Stapleton explained, that at a previous meeting, the board members approved the BHS Peru field experience. She also explained that, during planning, there has been a change in the dates originally presented to the board members sought approval for a change in the dates for that Peru experience, moving it from spring break to summer break. Motion made by Felicia Devore and seconded by Dr. Rhett Richardson. (Approved unanimously)

### **IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion made to enter Executive Session at 6:40 p.m. Motion made by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by Felicia Devore for the purpose of discussing Superintendent Stapleton's annual evaluation.

Motion to exit Executive Session at 7:05 p.m. Motion made by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by Felicia Devore.

The approved action/motion at the end stated, "After reviewing Dr. Crystal Stapleton's evidence on the District's progress towards the goals, and considering the Board members' comments regarding Dr. Stapleton's job performance, I move that we conclude as a Board that Dr. Stapleton receive an overall outstanding evaluation for the 2022-2023 school year." Motion made by Felicia Devore and seconded by Dr. Rhett Richardson. (Approved unanimously)

Board unanimously approved the adjournment of the meeting. The motion was made by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by Felicia Devore at 7:09 p.m.

Chair Rosey Anderson

Clerk Rhett Richardson