

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

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

**PLACE:** Barnwell Elementary School-Multipurpose Room, 10524 Marlboro Avenue, Barnwell, SC 29812

**PRESENT:**

**Board of Trustees:** Rosey Anderson, Chair; Felicia Devore, Vice-chair; SGM Abraham Sexton, Clerk; Becky Huggins, Member; Dr. Rhett Richardson, Member

**District Office:** Crissie Stapleton, Superintendent; Rachel Wall, Assistant Superintendent/Director of Curriculum; Tina Smith, Administrative Assistant; Kelley Shealy, Curriculum Support Coach; John Moody, IT Director

The agenda for the meeting was as follows:

### **OPENING BUSINESS**

1. Chair Rosey Anderson called the meeting to order. SGM Abraham Sexton delivered the Reflection. Felicia Devore 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.
2. The board unanimously approved the agenda. Motion was made by Becky Huggins and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton.
3. The board unanimously approved the consent agenda items. Motion was made by Felicia Devore and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton.
4. There was one hearing of the public. Reverend Al Rivett from Christ Presbyterian Church thanked the school board and Dr. Stapleton for allowing past members of the Presbyterian Church to collect memorabilia, furniture, and sheet music from the old Presbyterian Church on Franklin Street in Barnwell, which is now owned by the district. He expressed how appreciative they were and how much it meant to all the members.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

#### **A. Recognition**

##### **1. Student Recognition**

Superintendent Stapleton acknowledged each principal to come forward to recognize the following students:

- a. South Carolina Junior Scholar were recognized by Principal Henrietta Williams.
  - Jackson Bell (ERW)
  - Hampton Gantt (Math)
  - Shelby McHenry (ERW)
  - Aden Rutland (ERW)
- b. Perfect Scores on SC Ready were recognized by Principal Kay Gooding.
  - Anders Thompson, Math
  - Kennedy Harvey, Science
  - Jace Horn, Science
- c. Perfect Scores on End of Course Tests were recognized by Principal Franklin McCormack.
  - Liberty Vanacore, Biology
  - Alyssa Tedder, Biology
  - Audrey Sanders, Biology
  - Morgan Mixon, English 2

#### **B. Information**

##### **1. District Updates**

Superintendent Stapleton provided the following district updates.

- a. FEMA Gym Update

- The specialist will perform a Phase 1 Archaeological Survey that is conducted in accordance with the standards for archaeology outlined in South Carolina Standards for Archaeological Processes.
  - The archeological team will be on site at BHS Tuesday and Wednesday of next week to complete the archeological study.
- b. The LED Lighting Projects at GBMS and BES have been completed. This concludes the projects at each school across the district. They have begun working on the application for the district office. To date, since July 2022, we have saved over \$138,000 in our energy conservation program.
- c. Facility and ESSER Highlights:
- Work has begun with Wade's Repair in the BPS Gymnasium to add a new HVAC system.
  - We had the kickoff meeting for the BHS Fire Alarm System with Carver Security and that work is scheduled to begin.
  - The window and door project was officially approved by OSF for BPS, GBMS, and BHS. The Pre-bid meeting was March 8, 2023. The bid opening is March 22, 2023.
  - New shade structures have been ordered for two BPS playgrounds, and work will begin soon on renovating the picnic shelter at BPS.
  - We have received a proposal for roof repairs and/or maintenance from Lyon & Associates. We are advertising the bid beginning next week and plan to have a bid opening on April 5, 2023.
  - The BPS auditorium seats have been finalized and that project is currently being scheduled to begin.
  - Projects that we are currently working on with our engineering firm to gain approval through OSF include new intercom system at BPS, new bathrooms in GBMS gymnasium and main hallway, new bathrooms at the football stadium, and new flooring throughout GBMS.
- d. Update regarding recent bomb threat:
- SLED has determined the origin of bomb threats to have been electronically generated from juveniles living in Texas and California. Law enforcement officials in those areas are addressing them directly and working to determine more information from them.
  - The district sent out a letter Friday, March 3rd giving an update to all families within the district. The district had been communicating with BHS families and sending a letter following each evacuation response; however, we wanted to send something districtwide explaining what our families may have heard about on social media.
  - We continue to work closely with SLED and local law enforcement to assist in providing any information they may need, helping follow up on any possible leads, etc.
  - Superintendent Stapleton expressed appreciation and gratitude for the following agencies for the prompt and thorough assistance they have provided when securing the building and activating our emergency protocols:
    - Barnwell County Sheriff's Department
    - SLED
    - Barnwell County Emergency Management
    - Barnwell Police Department
    - Barnwell Fire Department
    - Medshore
    - Savannah River Site
  - We also thank our administrators, staff, and students for quickly executing our emergency response plans. We are also grateful to our families for working with us to ensure a safe learning environment for all students.
  - Superintendent Stapleton shared follow-up information to the meeting with Special Agent Josh Deurkop from SLED's Bomb Squad:
    - Special Agent Deurkop's first words were that we are not alone, and SLED has seen unprecedented rises in bomb threats statewide and nationwide.



- We continue to assure our families and community members that our local law enforcement and SLED consider this a huge priority in our district and across South Carolina
- Revisions to Comprehensive Safety Plan (currently being evaluated for feedback from Barnwell County Sheriff's Department and SLED)
  - Added day to day security recommendations (things we were already doing but we wanted to add them in writing in our plan)
  - Elaborated on specific responses to different types of threats (rather than just "threat," breaking it down into phone, email, written, verbal, etc.)
  - Included how to conduct a building search (i.e. what to look for, how to check hallways, etc.)
  - Included recommendations from SLED on how to assess a threat
  - Added a modified evacuation plan
- A new Emergency Response Command Center is currently being installed at the former Presbyterian Church location.
- e. Superintendent Stapleton requested the Board of Trustees schedule a work session at the end of March. Possible dates were discussed.

## ADVOCACY

### BASIC STRUCTURE

#### A. Actions

1. Approval of Naming Facilities Application:
  - a. Superintendent Stapleton explained that the request was submitted by Rhonda McElveen on behalf of many friends and family. The request is to name the church property the Carolyne S. Williams Early Childhood Center.
  - b. Superintendent Stapleton provided the following background information: Carolyne Williams previously served as superintendent of Barnwell School District 45 and gave 38 years of dedicated service to this district, serving as a teacher, an assistant principal, a principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent her last 5 years prior to retirement. The application outlined in detail her work in education and within the community.
  - c. The application specifically references the church property Barnwell School District 45 purchased in 2020, Carolyne Williams played a critical role in helping the district secure that property. She worked directly with The Shepherding Team of Charleston Atlantic Presbytery and helped secure the purchase of the property, as well as led the efforts of the Session of the church requesting that \$20,000 of the proceeds be donated back to the district for a mission to humanity in working with young children and families in our community to prepare them for school.
  - d. Motion made by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by Felicia Devore that the old Presbyterian Church property will be renamed in honor of Carolyne S. Williams as the Carolyne S. Williams Early Childhood Learning Center. The motion was approved unanimously.
2. Approval of the Second Reading and Final Approval of Policy GCLE – Unencumbered Time:
  - a. A model policy was approved by the State Board in January. Now, based on legislation that was enacted last school year, the district must provide a policy to the State Department of Education showing we have a policy in place to ensure the principal of each school will establish an unencumbered time schedule that will provide at least 30 minutes duty-free time each regular school day for all qualified teachers. Eligible teachers include full-time teachers teaching Kindergarten through 5th grade and working a minimum of 30 hours per week, as well as teachers responsible for instructing a special education class for more than 20 percent of the school day with students who are removed from the general education setting.
  - b. Motion made by Felicia Devore and seconded by SGM Abraham. The motion was approved unanimously.
3. Approval of the First Reading of Policy IMDB – Flag Displays:
  - a. We already had a policy ensuring that the schools will fly the United States flag and the flag of the state of South Carolina on the grounds of each school every day that school is in session. This

policy, based on legislation that was passed and a regulation passed by the State Board of Education, that all public schools will display, in a prominent place, the South Carolina flag and the flag of the United States inside every public school building, as well as specific mottos of the United States and South Carolina as listed in this model policy.

b. Motion made by Becky Huggins and seconded by SGM Abraham Sexton. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Approval of BHS TSA Chapter Overnight Trip:

a. The South Carolina Technology Student Association (SCTSA) State Conference will be held on Sunday 3/26/23 through Tuesday 3/28/23. Barnwell High School TSA Chapter has 14 students (9 boys & 5 girls). Mr. Steve Andrews, sponsor our TSA organization, would like to take these students to Myrtle Beach for the SCTSA State Conference.

b. Motion made by SGM Abraham Sexton and seconded by Dr. Rhett Richardson. The motion was approved unanimously.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Richardson-** I am very proud of the accomplishments of the students being recognized today. Thank you to all the teachers that lead and guide our students. Thank you Sheriff Griffith, Roger Riley, John Moody and Special Agent Dekroup for your help and the safety recommendations that were made. It amazes me that Special Agent Dekroup predicted every step that happens in these situations and that is how it played out. The person or persons responsible should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

**Devore-** Congratulations to all the students, teachers, and parents on your recognition. Special thanks to the agencies that stepped in to help during the bomb threats. Thank you for your hard work keeping everyone safe.

**Huggins-** I am sorry for all the recent challenges that everyone has had to face. It is very impressive how it was handled. Congratulations to all the students being recognized today. This is one of my favorite times, when students are being recognized for their hard work. GO WARHORSES!! There's a lot of spring sports going on and best of luck to everyone.

**Sexton-** Dr. Stapleton, thank you for your support. You have really stepped up to the challenges of everything going on. I am thankful for a superintendent who has done an outstanding job. Thank you to all the local law enforcement involved. We can't thank them enough and please pass that on to them. Thank you to the principals and staff as you continued to work through all the challenges you faced. I am proud of you, Ms. Williams, on your promotion and again thank you to Dr. Stapleton. Thank you to a school board that always works together.

**Anderson-** Mr. Sexton, thank you for the kind words about the school board. Mr. Carson and Ms. Williams, congratulations on your new jobs. Congratulations to the students recognized here today. Keep up the hard work. Thank you to local law enforcement for not allowing anything to be taken away from the students. Thank you to Mr. McCormack. I personally don't know if I could have survived everything that you had to deal with. Thanks again to the local law enforcement for everything you do to keep our district safe.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no need for Executive Session.

Board unanimously approved the adjournment of the meeting at 6:54 p.m. The motion was made by Becky Huggins and seconded by Felicia Devore.

Chair Rosey Anderson

Clerk Alvin L. Sexton