

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

**TIME:** 6:00 p.m., Thursday, January 11, 2024

**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; Kelly Shealy, Curriculum Support  
Coach: Holly Hutto, CFO; John Moody, IT Director

The agenda for the meeting was as follows:

### I. OPENING BUSINESS

- A. Rosey Anderson-Chair, called the meeting to order. Rosey Anderson, Chair 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 Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by Felicia Devore.
- C. The Board unanimously approved the consent agenda items. Motion made by Felicia Devore and seconded by Dr. Rhett Richardson.
- D. There was no hearing of the public.

### II. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

#### A. Recognition

1. Superintendent Stapleton recognized SCSBA School Board Recognition and Appreciation  
Superintendent Stapleton announced that January is recognized by the SCSBA as School Board Appreciation Month. The theme for the month is "In it to Win It". Superintendent Stapleton read the Governor's Proclamation. *She stated that it was an honor for the district to be able to thank the school board and they were presented with small tokens of appreciation from schools within the district. We would like to thank you for your support to our students, staff, and parents and community.*
2. Superintendent Stapleton stated that Chair Anderson will read the South Carolina School Board Member Ethical Principles and the school board member will sign and it will be placed in a frame that will be on display in the board room. *She stated that she feels one of the greatest strengths of our school board is their ethics and integrity that they put into their thoughts about decisions that are made.* Chair Anderson read the Ethical Principles aloud.

#### B. Information

1. Superintendent Stapleton presented district updates:
  - On Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, we operated as an eLearning day. On Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, we will be operating on a half-day schedule. This will allow the buses to complete their routes and return by 2:00 pm when the predicted severe weather should occur.
  - Door and window project has moved to the final stage at BPS. The project continues to move forward smoothly and there are so many positive comments. It is so wonderful to see these windows and doors installed that we have been waiting for so long because it took a year for approval.
  - HVAC Project is also in its final stage. All units have been placed, and they are just doing minor completions.
  - The final ESSER III projects are waiting on OSF approval, then bidding can take place. We are expecting approval by the end of this week or first of next week. (restrooms, GBMS flooring, etc.)
  - Awning projects at BPS, GBMS and BHS will begin soon. Mike Beasley will be meeting with the contractor on Friday.
  - Stage and wall padding at BHS will be beginning soon. Quotes have been processed.
  - Gym floor at BPS and BHS will be going through improvements. We are currently finalizing quotes and paperwork, then scheduling a date to complete. These are some of the bigger highlight since we were last together.



- Pierson Collective that came in and did our video last year and did such a wonderful job has been contracted again to come back onsite in February to film a Barnwell County School District recruitment video and short videos that we can use in regard to the new district. In March, they will be back to create a Barnwell District 45 video to unveil at the district celebration at the end of the year. Kelly Shealy is also helping with the video ideas. We have discussed bringing back some retired teachers in an informal setting to do small videos to help truly tell the story of Barnwell School District 45 so we can share it when we bring everyone together at an event at the end of the school year. *We're excited at bringing them back. They are the epitome of professionalism and so creative with how they put everything together.*
2. Superintendent Stapleton presented Barnwell County School District Consolidation Update:
- We held a work session in December to receive an updated report from the M.B. Kahn and SSOE facility study. This is for more information gathering, and they brought to the board members additional information regarding the new district's facilities. There is another work session scheduled for January.
  - No decisions have been made regarding facilities at this time. The only action that has occurred in a board meeting regarding facilities is that the district office will be located at 770 Hagood Avenue in Barnwell.
  - It has been established as a priority to keep PreK through 8th grade in the communities in which they are currently located.
  - Several collaborative planning meetings have occurred since our November meeting:
    - CFO, High School Principals, and the Athletic Directors
    - Curriculum Departments
    - Transportation Department Leaders
    - Joint PCG Medicaid Nursing Review
    - Joint PCG Medicaid Therapist Review
    - Early Childhood Work Session
  - The salary study is currently being completed with Phase 3, which includes district-level staff members, principals, assistant principals, administrative assistants, attendance clerks, facilitators, and substitutes.
  - In November, the transition board reviewed the "First Reading" of policies for:
    - SECTION A- FOUNDATION AND BASIC COMMITMENTS
    - SECTION B- SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS
  - A team of representatives from all three areas of the county met to discuss School of Choice recommendations for Barnwell County School District. During the 2024-2025 school year, there will be two choice options available to students and parents in Barnwell County School District: zoned schools and schools open for expanded enrollment choice. There will be an application and applicants may apply by a specified deadline. A specific timeline will be created when the School of Choice plans are approved by the Board of Trustees. A policy will also be created at the appropriate time, outlining the information included here.
3. Superintendent Stapleton presented the 2024-2025 Proposed School Calendar
- There was a proposed calendar presented at the transition board December work session and will be an action item at the January meeting. The 2024-2025 calendar does mimic the current 2023-2024 calendar closely. The first Monday in August, which is when students started this year, is proposed to be August 5, 2024 (this year it was August 7, 2023). The main differences in the two calendars include the required election day holiday, as well as the final two student half-days falling after Memorial Day. We pulled together a team from representatives across the county to help with the calendar option.
4. Superintendent Stapleton presented the FEMA Safehouse and Gymnasium update:
- You have a copy of the signed addendum in your folder. The estimated cost of Phase II of this project is \$10,184,916.00 to cost shared \$7,638,687.00 federal and \$2,546,229.00 local. The total cost of both phases is total project cost- \$10,806,513.64 with the federal share being \$8,104,885.23 and the local share of \$2,701,628.41. Our 2-year extension request was granted and the POP (period of performance) will end November 9, 2025.

### III. New Business

#### A. Actions

##### 1. Approval of the GBMS Addendum to Strategic Plan

- GBMS recently revisited and reviewed their strategic plan to include a turnaround component to address steps and goals for improving student growth. In an effort to increase student achievement and growth, the turnaround plan component of their revised addendum to the strategic plan includes specific and measurable goals, actions, professional development plans, and academic interventions that are necessary to continue on their continuous journey to improve student progress.

We do bring to you tonight the request for approval of the GBMS Addendum to Strategic Plan. Motion approved by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by Felicia Devore. (Approved unanimously)

*Dr. Rhett Richardson asked if the winter break includes the time for additional help that is needed by students?*

*Superintendent Stapleton explained that there are two intercession days included during winter break planned to target any students that need that extra help.*

*Chair Richardson asked if additional information could be sent out to explain what the intercession days are. Superintendent Stapleton stated that that it would definitely be looked into to get that additional information out to parents and follow up.*

**Richardson-** I would like to thank everyone for their hard work and hope everyone had a great new year. We have such wonderful people, and this shows the quality of the people leading our students. We received a thank you note from Mandy Smith, and she took the time to do that and a lot of people wouldn't do that. I'm glad you're here.

**Devore-** I, too, would like to thank everyone for their hard work that they do for the kids and all the changes that we're going through, and hopefully everyone stays safe tomorrow. Thank you, Mandy, for the thank you note. We love to get them. You may think that we don't get them, but we do.

**Anderson-** I ditto that. This district could not run without every one of you. I know it starts at the top and goes down. Thank you for everything that you do. We appreciate the superintendent and others looking out for our students and this bad weather. We appreciate all the gifts that we received, but we don't do this job for the gifts. Although, I don't consider it a job. We appreciate you, Crissie. You make our job easy.

### IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made to enter Executive Session at 6:29 p.m. Motion made by Felicia Devore and seconded by Dr. Rhett Richardson for the purpose of discussing Out of District Student Discipline Matter- Student A.

Motion to exit Executive Session at 7:08 p.m. Motion made by Dr. Rhett Richardson and seconded by Felicia Devore.

The denied action/motion at the end stated, "I make a motion that we deny the request for enrollment of Out of District Student A." 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