

Calhoun County Public Schools
Minutes of the Board of Trustees
September 16, 2024
Dr. Ferlondo Tullock, Superintendent

Members Present: Mr. Gary Porth, Chairperson; Mr. Kevin Jenkins, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Debra Fredrick, Secretary; Mrs. Sandra Tucker; and Mr. Ned Nelson.

Dr. Tullock asked that the Board remember former students and community members and their family members who were recently lost. (Patrick Dunning, Ania Chalk, and Jada Fludd)

Call to Order/Moment of Silence: Mr. Porth called the meeting to order, welcomed visitors and staff and asked everyone present to stand for a Moment of Silence and the "Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag".

Notice to the Media: In accordance with the S.C. Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80-(E), as amended, the following have been notified of this meeting: The Calhoun Times; The Times and Democrat; The District Website and notices placed on the bulletin boards in all schools and the District Office.

Approval of Agenda: Mr. Nelson moved, with a second by Mr. Jenkins, to approve the agenda as submitted. Passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Ms. Fredrick moved, with a second by Mrs. Tucker, to approve the minutes of August 19, 2024 and September 5, 2024 as submitted. Passed unanimously.

Chairperson's Report: None

Finance: Mr. Rusty Brunson, Chief Financial Officer, presented the July 2024 Monthly Financial Report and Budget Adjustments for Board consideration. Mr. Brunson said that in the month and year to date, the District received 3% of the projected budgeted revenue for the month of July. Mr. Brunson said for the month and year to date, the District expended 4% of the General Fund Expenditures. He said year to date Encumbrances are 55% for the twelve months of the fiscal period.

Mr. Nelson moved, with a second by Ms. Fredrick, to approve the Monthly Financial Report and Budget Adjustments for July 2024. Passed unanimously.

Mr. Brunson said that the Finance Department is continuing to close out the 2024 Fiscal Year. He added that the auditors are scheduled to come the second week of October to begin field work.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Ferlondo Tullock, Superintendent, welcomed and introduced Ms. Mary Dixon with the Calhoun County Soil and Water Conservation and Mr. Richard Rankin, Director of Interlaken Wildlife Center. They talked about the partnership that the District has with them and some of the upcoming activities that involve the fourth grade and part of the fifth grade students in the District. Ms. Dixon said every student will have the opportunity to catch a fish and learn about pond ecosystems. She said the field trips will be supported by interactive classroom levels aligned with South Carolina Curriculum Standards.

Mr. Rankin explained the program and the property layout to the Board. He said the Interlaken Wildlife Center is located in Cameron, SC on Hwy. 176, and is 2,200 acres of property. Mr. Rankin said the Wildlife Centers mission is to connect people to the outdoors through outdoor education, recreation, hunting, and helping young people learn about nature.

Ms. Frances Keller, Human Resources Director, presented Policy GDQB – Resignation of Support Staff for First Reading and Amendment.

Ms. Fredrick moved, with a second by Mrs. Tucker, to approve Policy GDQB – Resignation of Support Staff for First Reading and Amendment.

Ms. Karen Jackson, Director of Food Services, presented the 2024-2025 Food Services Updates to the Board. She said the Food Service Department has been busy with menu development, menu meal preparation, as well as operational audits to make sure the District is in compliance with the National Programs. Dr. Tullock asked Ms. Jackson when the Administrative Review will be held. Ms. Jackson said it will be conducted on April 25, 2025.

Mr. George Kiernan, Chief of Operations and Communications, presented a Field Trip Request to the Board. He said the Band has been selected to participate in the 100th Anniversary of the Turkey Classic in Montgomery, Alabama on November 28, 2024.

Mr. Jenkins moved, with a second by Mr. Nelson, to approve the Field Trip request as presented by Mr. Kiernan. Passed unanimously.

Mr. Kiernan presented Facility Updates to the Board for the month of August:

- All three schools conducted a required intruder drill.
- New student desks and chairs will arrive over the Christmas Holiday break for grades 6-8.
- New standing floor machines have been purchased for each of the three schools.
- Mr. Kiernan met with the faculty advisory council and looked at different teacher desk options. After feedback, new teacher desks will be ordered.
- Mr. Kiernan and the Board discussed the problems occurring with the gym floor at Sandy Run K-8 School.

Mrs. Christia Murdaugh, Interim Deputy Superintendent, updated the Board on Curriculum. Mrs. Murdaugh said in the past, the third-grade retention was based upon those students that had made Not Met One on the SC Ready Exam. She said this year the regulations have changed and now it will be based on the student's score of Not Met One and Not Met Two. Mrs. Murdaugh said this will cause our third-grade retention numbers to increase. She said the District will continue to hold Summer Reading Camps, but it is imperative that parents know that if their child's performance on the SC Ready Exam is not met, they must attend Summer Reading Camp or they face the danger of being retained in third grade. Mrs. Murdaugh explained to the Board the new Reading Plans Regulations and said the schools have already started working on the plans.

Mrs. Murdaugh said every year on April 30th the District must submit a District Strategic and School Renewal Plan to the State Department of Education. She said every school has a team that looks at where the District needs to grow in instruction, parent engagement, and environment. Mrs. Murdaugh said she is happy to announce that the District, along with the three schools, have been approved. She added this is a working plan and all schools and district must revisit the plans and make sure the goals are met. Mrs. Murdaugh shared the results for the Diagnostic Exam for iReady.

Mr. Mark Parker, Technology Director, shared Technology Updates with the Board. He said the District is at the end of Phase I of the Network Upgrade project for Calhoun County High School and Sandy Run K-8 School. He said he will inform the Board when Phase II of upgrades have started.

Mr. Parker said he has started looking into the sale of the old promethean boards. He said he is looking into the options of State Surplus, recycling companies and public sales.

Mr. Parker reported that during the last storm, several servers were damaged and he is now in the process of having the servers replaced. He thanked Mr. Brunson for assisting him in purchasing seven new servers from another district at a discounted price.

Mr. Parker said he is having the Camera Client Stations replaced in the District. He said the Stations have reached their capacity and the new stations will have more capacity capabilities.

Mr. Parker shared that the eSports Lab is going very well and based on a recent survey, there are thirty-two 9th graders that have expressed an interest in eSports. He said a survey will be sent out school wide and a letter to the parents to see what students are interested in eSports. He said the District has been chosen to participate for the second year of the State eSports Tournament at the EdTech Conference on November 13-15, 2024. Mr. Parker said he will share more information as soon as he receives it from the State Department.

Dr. Tullock shared Superintendent Updates with the Board. He said he is proud to announce that the District has formed a coed tennis team. He said the seven students have begun training and conditioning for competition in the South Carolina High School League in the Fall of 2025. Dr. Tullock thanked the young pioneers for embarking on this journey with the District, and thanked Coach 1st Sgt. Jackson and Mr. Davis, as well as the County's Recreation Department for allowing the District to use the tennis courts at the Athletic Complex. Dr. Tullock asked Coach 1st Sgt. Jackson and two students on the team to stand and be recognized.

Dr. Tullock said recently there was an eSports Team interest meeting held for students to participate in the newly formed Cyber Saints eSports team. He said there were forty-eight students that attended the meeting with thirty-eight still interested in being a part of the team. He said he hopes that with the addition of these new teams that we are capturing more students for their involvement in extra-curricular activities in their area of interests.

Dr. Tullock said he would like to publicly thank the members of the Community Communicators and Faculty Advisory groups as they held the first meeting last week. He said he will begin meeting with the Student Advisory group on September 26, 2024. He said these groups have been instrumental in developing the academic calendars as well as sharing ideas and concerns from their schools.

Dr. Tullock said at the October Board meeting, a draft of the academic calendars will be presented that will be shared among the staff and community for vote and ultimately the Board's approval for the 2025-26 school year.

Dr. Tullock thanked all of the students, staff members, parents, and community stakeholders for their hard work in producing the SC READY and SC EOC scores from the Spring 2024 Assessments. He said the District was featured last week on WLTX television news for the improvement of SC Ready scores from the Spring 2023 administration among the third through eighth grade students. He commended the high school students for their performance on SC EOC. He said they experienced growth in Algebra 1, Biology, and English II. He said the District was mentioned by the State Superintendent and highlighted on the State Department's website for the District's growth in English II. He said the students had the largest margin of gain across the State at more than 19%. Dr. Tullock said hats off to all students, staff, parents, and other stakeholders who contributed to these measures of improvement.

Dr. Tullock reminded everyone that homecoming activities for the 2024-25 school year will take place the week of September 30th, culminating with the parade the afternoon of October 4, 2024 and the football game vs. Williston-Elko. He asked everyone to stay connected through the high school's website and social media for any posts about the schedule for the week.

Public Participation: None

Executive Session: Mr. Jenkins moved, with a second by Mr. Nelson, to go into Executive Session to consider Personnel Recommendation(s) and Resignation[s] and then return to open session at the completion of discussions. Passed unanimously.


Upon returning from Executive Session, Mr. Porth announced that the Board was back in open session.

Board Action(s): Mr. Jenkins moved, with a second by Ms. Fredrick, to approve the Personnel Recommendations and Resignations as presented by the Superintendent. Passed unanimously.

Adjournment: Mr. Nelson moved, with a second by Ms. Fredrick, to adjourn at 9:36 p.m. Passed unanimously.



Board of Trustees Secretary



Date of Approval

Respectfully Submitted,
Pamela Kennedy