

Williamsburg County School Board of Trustees
Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 18, 2024 – 6:00 PM
Public Service Administrative Building – Council Chambers 1st Floor
201 W. Main Street – Kingtree, South Carolina 29556

Members Present: Marva B. Cannon, Dr. Jerry L. Dicks, Rev. Alfred Darby, Dr. Janice Gamble, Dr. Kenneth Burgess, Gary McKenzie, Mike Floyd, Mack Burgess, and Carletta Scott Isreal

Others Present: Dr. Kelvin Wymbs, Tawan B. Alston, Wendy R. Fulton, Brent Streett, Jennifer Lamb, Genia Smith, J. Omar Montgomery, Berlinda Mack, Shawn V. Chestnut, Catherine Williams, Jennifer Holliday, Latonya West, Michael Barrineau, Eunice Alston, Myron Davis, Attorney Vernie Williams, and Ernie Young

Meeting Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Marva B. Cannon at 6:00 pm. The secretary confirmed the Establishment of Quorum and the chair confirmed the Notification of Media.

Welcome

The chair welcomed all present to the meeting, and stated that today marks another day that we Imagine Greatness unfolding.

Moment of Silence

Dr. Dicks asked all persons to observe a Moment of Silence.

Pledge of Allegiance

All persons were asked to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Consent Agenda

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda for tonight's meeting by Dr. J. Gamble, seconded by Dr. J. Dicks. There was a question by A. Darby: Rev. Darby stated that this is just an observation regarding the Elections of Officers on the agenda. He stated that he understands the Policy, but other districts hold their election of officers until the newly elected board members are in place. He also stated that the swearing in of new members and the election of officers should be done at the same time. He stated that this Policy should be reviewed to reflect that. After discussion, the motion was carried.

Action Items

A motion was made by Dr. J. Gamble to approve the Williamsburg County School Board of Trustees Minutes from Monday, October 28, 2024, seconded by M. Burgess. The motion was carried.

Thought of Today

Gary McKenzie shared the Thought for Today.

Public Participation

Shawn V. Chestnut, parent, appeared before the board to expressed her concerns about her daughter being in now two bus accidents. She stated that she was supposed to received something in writing regarding those accidents and have not at this time. She did however, received a message from the school regarding the second bus accident. She is thankful that changes have been made in a brief time. She commends Dr. B. McKnight, board member Dr. J. Dicks, and M. Frasier, the principal at the High School for contacting her. She also stated that she would like to see online, a protocol in place for what happens when there is a bus accident. She also asked if there is a task force on bus safety, she would like to be a part. She stated that she only has the students best interest at heart. Madam Chair stated that she was aware that the administration had contacted her regarding this incident. She thanked her for bringing this to our attention. She also thanked Dr. McKnight and Dr. Wymbs for putting those protocols in place.

Legislative Update

M. Burgess, provided the Legislative update from the SC Education Association on Article 11 of the South Carolina constitution and pursue the following actions: to ensure equitable and effective educational funding, fully fund public schools, prioritize the classrooms, respect educators as professionals, provide competitive compensation, increase unencumbered time, reduce burdensome paperwork, produce a fair and equitable contract, incentivize careers of hard to staff regions, improve teacher retention and recruitment programs, trust educators as education experts, provide comprehensive benefits, provide an education of excellence, invest in student wellness and school safety. Those are recommendations by the S.C. Education Association.

Election of Officers

Attorney Vernie Williams, of Halligan, Mahoney and Williams conducted the election of officers. A motion was made by Dr. J. Dicks to re-elect all current positions to serve in their same positions. The motion was seconded by J. Gamble, there was a question of unreadiness by A. Darby to vote on positions individually. Attorney Williams stated that in the interest of parliamentary procedures, the board would vote individually for each position. The position of chair, Dr. J. Dicks nominated M. Cannon, seconded by Dr. J. Gamble. The motion was carried. Board Chair M. Cannon would now preside over the other board positions. The position of Vice-Chair, Dr. J. Gamble nominated Dr. J. Dicks, seconded by A. Darby. The motion was carried. The position of Secretary, Dr. J. Gamble nominated Carletta Scott-Isreal, seconded by Dr. K. Burgess. The motion was carried. The position of Parliamentarian, Dr. J. Dicks nominated Dr. J. Gamble, seconded by G. McKenzie. Mr. A. Darby abstained from the vote; the motion was carried. M. Cannon, board chair, appointed Mr. Mack Burgess to serve as the Legislative Liaison, he graciously accepted.

Bond Presentation

Mr. Bob Damron of Compass Municipal Advisors presented the Bond Resolution Presentation to the board. There was much discussion regarding the Williamsburg County School District Building Program Funding Report. After discussion, there were several questions asked by board members. They were: How much is available in the building fund, what will be the interest rate and it was asked of Mr. Damron to explain what was mills. Upon answering all the questions, Mr. Damron also mention that this resolution was also already approved by the SC Department of Education. A motion was made by A. Darby to adopt the Resolution as presented. It was seconded by Dr. J. Gamble. The motion was carried.

Academic Update, Genia Smith, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership Support

G. Smith, Assistant Superintendent, provided the November updates to include Early Childhood Education. 1.) WCSD is proud of the progress being made towards the SCDE LETRS implementation. 2.) 16 teachers, coaches, and administrators completed their final Virtual LETRS training. 3.) 4 Early childhood teachers, along with Mrs. Berlinda Mack, completed their first 8-hour Early Childhood LETRS course on November 14. 4.) 38 teachers, coaches and administrators are completing Volume 1 of the LETRS course. 5.) Mrs. Smith also informed the board that Mrs. Fred, Mr. Loner and Mrs. Mack were leaders in the Mocking Writing/End of Course BLITZ. 6.) Accountability, conducted data meetings to discuss State Report Card, School Climate Survey, I-Ready Growth Monitoring, Median Annual Targets (MAT)/added value. 7.) Pee Dee AHEC 2024-2025, 7 Williamsburg County students currently enrolled. 8.) 3 Kingstree High School Students are a part of the Pathways project. She also mentioned that the district received the Stronger Connections Grant, which the district was allocated \$348,796.00. In December, the Office of Teaching and Learning are doing school visits. A. Darby then asked if all the science labs had new equipment? Mrs. Smith stated equipment has been purchased but not received yet.

Medical Update

Nurse Lamb presented a medical update to the board. She stated that flu clinics for students are being provided on November 19th at all of the schools. She said we have a nurse in all of our schools with one on each side of KHS. She also said that COVID, RSV and flu numbers are decreasing. Nurse Lamb informed the board that since August 1 – November 1, 2024, the school nurses had seen 5,811 students in the health rooms. She also stated that this is the first year that WCSD has an Athletic Trainer on staff thanks to the InnovATe grant through the Kory Stringer Institute. She said we are still in the process of looking for a qualified applicant for the position at Hemingway High School. Mr. Burgess asked has the trainer position been posted. Ms. Lamb stated that it has been continually posted.

Personnel Update

L. West presented to the board an update from Human Resources. Mr. A. Darby asked if all teachers were certified. Ms. West said not at the time, but we have opportunities in place to receive their certification.

Fine Arts Update

Mrs. J. Holliday presented a slide presentation of pictures to the board regarding the activities the Fine Arts Department has been doing. She also gave the Board a book regarding the Arts in Basic Curriculum and told them that she was excited to be chosen by the SC Department of Education to attend the National Gifted Conference in Seattle Washington, which will cover all areas of giftedness including the Arts. She was very excited about this opportunity and could not wait to bring back great information and make new connections for our county. She also mentioned the upcoming Christmas Program, Visual Art Newsletter, All County will be held on March 20, 2025. The chair commended her for being chosen to attend the National Gifted Conference. Dr. Burgess asked if all the schools applied for the \$10,000.00 grants. Madam Chair informed Dr. Burgess that all the schools had the opportunity to apply for the grants, only two schools did. Dr. Dicks stated that in the future, he would like to see that all of the schools apply for any upcoming grants.

Facilities Update

Mr. M. Barrineau and Mr. O. Montgomery presented the facilities update to the board. Mr. Montgomery stated that we have many important projects scheduled at this time. 1.) The HHS gym floors and bleachers have been completed, 2.) The HVAC upgrades are district wide and ongoing. 3.) Mr. Montgomery stated that the fire alarm replacements at KHS East, West and District office have been completed. 4.) The Intercom P/A systems have been replaced at all schools. 5.) Door access control installation has been completed at KHS East and West Campus, and at CEM Middle School. 6.) The CEM gym floor and bleachers should begin sometime in February 2025 after the completion of basketball season. 7.) Kenneth Garner Leadership Academy fencing bids was open today and will be awarded by this coming Friday. 8.) Awning replacement bid for the district offices has been awarded and is scheduled during the winter break. 9.) Greeleyville STEAM Academy 5th grade wing, kitchen, cafeteria and multipurpose room ground breaking ceremony was held today. A. Darby asked why are the fences and gates locked at both campuses at KHS and if that would be changed. Dr. Wymbs responded that no the gates will continue to be locked. He said that a plan was presented and approved to keep them lock for the safety of the students. There are ways to get on the campus, but for the safety of our students the gates are locked. Mr. Darby also asked if there was a schematic of the new building at Greeleyville STEAM Academy. Chair Cannon stated that there is a schematic of what the new wing will have, a copy was just presented to all board members. Rev. Darby asked, how many people will the multipurpose room accommodate? Mr. Montgomery stated that it will hold approximately 500. Dr. Wymbs also added that the same safety precautions that are happening at KHS are the same for HHS. He also thanked the facilities department for making sure that all of our buildings are up to code and thanked them for making sure everyone is safe. Chair Cannon also thanked the facilities department for the work they have done in the Hemingway Gym. She stated that it was beautiful. Dr. Dicks asked about the plans for the old district office and what is in place for those plans. They are awaiting funding to start this project. Dr. Wymbs stated that the plan for the old district office is to still provide housing for teachers. Rev. Darby asked if all the facilities air conditioning units are working. Mr. Montgomery stated that they all were working to their capacity.

Board Items

Chair Cannon asked if the board had anything else they would like to add. A. Darby stated that he was happy for the progress being made at Greeleyville STEAM Academy. He would like to see a new high school. Mrs. Isreal stated that she was very happy with the plans being made at Greeleyville STEAM Academy and that Dr. Wymbs has done a tremendous job, along with his support staff. Especially with the partnership with the University of South Carolina. She stated that she hopes that the board would take a look at Dr. Wymbs' performance evaluation and give him an increase. We appreciate you and hope that the board would quantify that. Dr. Dicks also thanked the facilities department for their hard work at the HHS gym. Rev. Darby then added that he hopes that bus drivers, food service workers, and custodians will receive a raise. Dr. Wymbs then welcomed Mr. Brent Street, the new finance director to the board meeting. Chair Cannon also thanked Mrs. Delphia Barr, Mr. Ernest Young and Mr. Travoy McCullough for being at the meeting and taking care of the board needs. Dr. Wymbs thanked his staff and told them to enjoy your family and friends during this holiday season.

Adjournment

Dr. J. Gamble made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by M. Burgess. The motion was carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Board Secretary: _____
Carletta Scott Isreal, Board Secretary

Date: _____

Board Chair: _____
Marva B. Cannon, Board Chair

Date: _____