

Calhoun County Public Schools
Minutes of the Board of Trustees
April 14, 2025
District Office
Dr. Ferlondo Tullock, Superintendent

Members Present: Mr. Gary Porth, Chairperson; Mr. Kevin Jenkins, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Debra Fredrick, Secretary; Mr. Ned Nelson. Mr. Michael Diaz, absent.

Call to Order/Moment of Silence: Mr. Porth, Chairperson, 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 Ms. Fredrick, to approve the agenda as submitted. Passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Ms. Fredrick moved, with a second by Mr. Jenkins, to approve the minutes of March 17, 2025 and April 7, 2025 and as submitted. Passed unanimously.

Student Recognition: Dr. Treda Nelson, Chief Accountability Officer, asked Dr. Tullock, along with Board Members and Principals to come forward and recognize students receiving the Third Quarter Highest GPA Awards for the 2024-25 school year. Each student was given a Certificate of Award and a Calhoun County Public School's Honor Student Yard Sign to be placed at their residence.

Employee Recognition: Dr. Nelson presented the 2024-2025 Third Quarter District's Shining Star Awards to Jennifer Williford, April Rivers, Phermella Tullock, and Ayanna Glover. Each employee received a Certificate of Award and a gift card sponsored by Tri-County Electric Co-op.

Chairperson's Report: No Report

Finance: Mr. Rusty Brunson, Chief Financial Officer, presented the March 2024 Monthly Financial Report and Budget Adjustments for Board consideration. Mr. Brunson informed the Board that the District received 5.4% of the Projected Revenue and Year-to-Date, 75% of the projected General Fund Budgeted Revenue, expended 8.1% for the month and 72% for the year to date. He said Year-to-Date Encumbrances was 37% for the twelve-month Fiscal Period.

Mr. Nelson moved, with a second by Mr. Jenkins, to approve the Monthly Financial Report and Budget Adjustments for March 2025. Passed unanimously.

Mr. Brunson said the Finance Department is working on the 2025-2026 budget and the First Reading will be presented at the May Board Meeting. Mr. Brunson said recently, the District received a score of eleven from the State Department of Fiscal requirements which means the District is a very low risk financial district.

Superintendent's Report: Ms. Frances Keller, Director of Human Resources, presented the following Board Policies to the Board for Second Reading, amendment, and approval:

- Policy DBG Budget Adoption Process
- Policy DID Inventories - First Reading
- Policy DIE Audits/Financial Monitoring
- Policy ED Materials And Equipment Management
- Policy FA Facilities Development Goals/Priority Objectives
- Policy FB Facilities Planning - First Reading
- Policy FF Naming Facilities - First Reading
- Policy GCNA Supervision Of Instructional Staff
- Policy GCQF Discipline, Suspension and Dismissal Of Professional Staff - Action
- Policy GCR Nonschool Employment Of Professional Staff
- Policy GCRD Tutoring For Pay
- Policy GD Support/Classified Staff
- Policy GDO Evaluation Of Support Staff
- Policy GDQD Discipline, Suspension And Dismissal Of Support Staff Action
- Policy GDR Nonschool Employment Of Support Staff
- Policy IC School Year
- Policy LA Education Agency Relations Goals/Priority Objectives
- Policy LB School Community Cooperation
- Policy LBA Shared Services And Staff
- Policy LH Relations With Educational Accreditation Agencies

Mr. Nelson moved, with a second by Ms. Fredrick, to approve the Policies as presented by Ms. Keller for Second Reading, amendment, and approval. Passed unanimously.

Dr. Tullock requested that the June 2, 2025 Regular Called Board Meeting be changed to June 9, 2025 to accommodate District's schedules.

Mr. Jenkins moved, with a second by Mr. Nelson, to approve the June Board Meeting be changed to June 9, 2025.

Dr. Tullock shared Accountability Updates to the Board. Dr. Tullock said Spring assessments will soon begin for the students. He said the assessment results are used to arrive at the District's school report cards. Dr. Tullock said students in grades 3-8 will be assessed using the SC READY English, Math and Science. He said high school students in grades 9-11 will be taking the End of Course exams in U.S. History and Constitution, Biology, English II, and Algebra I. Dr. Tullock said the exam results are used in calculating the report cards. He said Assessment schedules will be shared by the schools. He asked parents to make certain that students are present each day of testing, well rested, and ready to perform at their very best. Dr. Tullock said breakfast will be served to students prior to beginning the day. Dr. Tullock shared the District's Report Card Ratings. Dr. Tullock provided the Board copies of the report card from each school to examine student performance from the 2023-2024 school year. He said the District should be receiving results from this year's assessment quickly as the scores are used to determine who needs to attend Summer Reading Camp.

Dr. Tullock shared Superintendent's Updates with the Board. He reminded everyone that Spring Break will begin this week. He said the first day of the break will be Friday, April 19, 2025 and students and staff will return to the classroom on Monday, April 28, 2025. Dr. Tullock wished everyone a safe and enjoyable break.

Dr. Tullock said State Assessments (SC READ ELA) will begin on May 6, 2025 for grades 3-8. He said high school students will begin testing on May 6, 2025 with EOC English II Writing.

Dr. Tullock asked for everyone's continued support of the sports teams that are in season. He said Baseball, Softball, Soccer, and Track are all competing and nearing the end of their seasons.

Dr. Tullock said that recently he shared a letter with parents and guardians expressing his sincerest concerns for the students' health as it relates to vaping. He said the letter and the associated phone blast explained the dangers of vaping and the effects it has on a developing brain and body. He asked the parents to be mindful of their children's possessions and actions as to help them lead a healthy lifestyle.

Dr. Tullock said just prior to Spring Break, he will send out a letter to go home with the students. He said this letter will be sharing details of the recent trend of predatory behaviors against children while online. Dr. Tullock said groups such as "764 Movement" are preying on young people while in chat groups, online gaming rooms, and social media. He urged parents to please monitor their children's interactions while using their personal devices to avoid any unwanted interactions.

Dr. Tullock congratulated and thanked Mr. Brunson, the finance staff, and those handling federal dollars for their work in appropriately managing those accounts. He said the District recently received notification of a recent audit of the accounting and the District received a score of "11" which is considered "Low Risk of errors."

Dr. Tullock congratulated Dr. Nelson and her staff for the results of the SPED audit that was conducted this past month.

Dr. Tullock shared a copy of a presentation that was shared by SLED to the Board. Dr. Tullock said the presentation shows the equivalents of THC found in beverages being sold over the counter in our area. He said this was shared to bring awareness of what could enter the schools in containers that look like average soda cans or energy drink cans. He said this is another attempt at advertising to underaged consumers.

Dr. Tullock thanked Dr. Nelson and the team that assisted her in producing Unity Day games. He said the Districts SPED students and their non-disabled peers enjoyed a morning of fun and games last Thursday at the high school. He added thanks to the staff, student volunteers, community partners and volunteers, and all other for an enjoyable occasion to celebrate our differences and show that we are truly a united school community.

Dr. Tullock shared a copy to the Board of the final copy of the JUUL settlement letter. He said that the District began the process of litigation of the JUUL case for advertisement that targeted under aged people possessing e-cigarettes. Dr. Tullock said the proceeds from the settlement have been

used to purchase vape detection devices placed around the campuses and for cessation programs for our students.

Dr. Tullock shared a copy of an invitation to the Board of the Exceptional Children's Expo to be held at St. Matthews K-8 School on May 3, 2025 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Mr. George Kiernan, Chief of Operation and Communications, shared Facilities updates with the Board:

- Yearly inspections of bleachers, curtain, and basketball goals, were completed by Master Craft on April 2-3, 2025.
- New desks for teachers have been ordered and will arrive in July.
- Gymnasium floor will be done at St. Matthews K-8 School this summer.
- The District purchased a new dump truck.
- Track walkthrough this week to review repairs for this summer.
- Saturday Say No to Vaping class had a group of seven students.
- District will be sending students to an Anti-Vaping Conference on April 30, 2025 at Saluda Shoals.

Public Participation: None

Executive Session: Mr. Jenkins moved, with a second by Ms. Fredrick, to go into Executive Session to consider Personnel Recommendation(s), the Superintendent's Evaluation, 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.

Mr. Jenkins moved, with a second by Mr. Nelson, to approve that the Superintendent's Evaluation with the extension of his contract to June 30, 2028 along with a 3% salary increase. Passed unanimously.

Dr. Tullock asked parents to help by beginning the process of registration for the coming school year. He asked the parents to make sure that in PowerSchool, they have their email listed and their current address and phone number so they can receive the registration link. Dr. Tullock said the link will be shared to the email address on file beginning in mid-July. He said the link will be a secured, students specific link for parents to use to register their student for the 25-26 school year. He said using the link, parents will be able to complete and sign the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) form. Dr. Tullock said the form must be completed before any student can be issued a technology device. He said it is his hope that 100% of the students will have their devices on day one of school. Dr. Tullock said in order for this to happen, parents must complete the AUP form and pay the \$25.00 technology usage fee. He said parents can in fact begin paying the fee at any time, as soon as now.

Mr. Mark Parker, Director of Technology, shared Technology Updates with the Board. He said the final documents to the E Rate Federal Funding Program has been sent and the deadline has been met. He said he is waiting for an approval commitment letter to be able to proceed with battery back ups for the District.

Hewlett Packard is currently working on the digital assets for the 2025-2026 student's digital refresh. He said this should be completed by June and he should start receiving the new devices. Mr. Parker said all devices will come in a case. He said the insurance policy for the devices will only cover accidental coverage and only 2 claims will be allowed for each device. Mr. Parker said all students must have the Student Acceptable Use Policy signed and the insurance policy paid before being issued a device.

Mr. Parker said the sound equipment in the auditorium at the high school has had a delay due to the recent tariffs. He said the company provided the District loaned equipment until the shipment arrives.

Mr. Parker said another level of security has been added to the District. He said filters have been added to block several social media sites. He told the Board that even with all the security in place, it is possible for students to use a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to go pass the firewalls. Mr. Porth expressed concerns on how a student is able to use a VPN. Mr. Parker said there is no way to block all VPNs. Mr. Parker said if he knows of a VPN that is being used, he can block that particular VPN.

Dr. Nelson shared Special Services Updates to the Board. She discussed topics such as Climate Surveys, Cognia Midcycle Progress Report, Special Needs Program Review, Student Services Update, Career and Technical Education.

Adjournment: Mr. Nelson moved, with a second by Mr. Jenkins, to adjourn at 10:24 p.m. Passed unanimously.

Debra Smucker
Board of Trustees Secretary

5-19-25
Date of Approval

Respectfully Submitted,
Pamela Kennedy
Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent