

**Calhoun County Public Schools
Minutes of the Board of Trustees
November 17, 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; and Mr. Michael Diaz.

Call to Order/Moment of Silence: Mr. Jenkins, Vice Chairperson, called the meeting to order, welcomed visitors and staff, and asked everyone 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 were notified of this meeting: *The Calhoun Times*, *The Times and Democrat*, the District website, and notices posted on 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 October 20, 2025, and November 10, 2025, as submitted. Passed unanimously.

Lift Program: Ms. Frances Keller, Director of Human Resources, said that during the 2024-2025 school year, the District had the opportunity to partner with Lift, to provide coaching and support for the teachers. Ms. Keller said the Lift Program is being offered to us this school year at no cost to the District. Ms. Keller introduced Dr. Elizabeth Gressette, Executive Director of the Foundation of Professional Development and Mrs. Janice Bell-McDowell, Consultant at the Foundation of Professional Development. Ms. Bell-McDowell presented an overview of the Lift Program to the Board, accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation outlining all the program's benefits. Dr. Gressette spoke to the Board about what the Lift Program will offer the teachers in the District. She said the Lift Program will be offered to the District at no cost due to a Grant from the Dorothy Lee Foundation.

Student Recognition: Mrs. Christia Murdaugh, Interim Deputy Superintendent, asked Dr. Ferlondo Tullock, along with Board Members and Principals, to come forward and recognize the students receiving the First Quarter Highest GPA Awards for the 2025-2026 school year. Each student was given a certificate of award and a Calhoun County Public School Honor Student Yard Sign to be placed at their residence.

Mr. Mark Parker, Director of Technology, asked Ms. Dixon, Head Coach, to come forward, as well as the Calhoun County Public School's eSports Team, to be recognized for participating in the eSports Tournament held at the Annual Technology Conference in Florence, SC.

Employee Recognition: Mrs. Murdaugh presented the District's Shining Star Awards to Mrs. Ellen Seibert, Ms. Ellen Heatley, Mrs. Michelle Stokes-Glover, Mr. Rusty Brunson, and Mrs. Karen Jackson. Each employee received a certificate of award and a gift card.

Chairperson's Report: No Report.

Finance: Mr. Rusty Brunson, Chief Financial Officer, presented the October 2025 Monthly Financial Report and Budget Adjustments for Board consideration. Mr. Brunson informed the Board that the District received 5% of the Projected Revenue and Year-to-Date, 13% of the General Fund Budgeted Revenue. Expenditures were 19% for the month and 29% year-to-date, with Encumbrances at 58% 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 October 2025. Passed unanimously.

Mr. Brunson said the Annual Audit should be completed by the end of the week. Mr. Brunson concluded by saying the Calhoun County High School Cafeteria furniture upgrade is almost complete. He said there was a mix-up with some of the chairs and the issue should be resolved before the December break.

Superintendent's Report: Ms. Frances Keller presented the following Policies for Second Reading, amendment, and approval:

- Policy GCC Professional Staff Leaves and Absences
- AR GCC-R Professional Staff Leaves and Absences
- GDC Support Staff Leaves and Absences
- AR GDC-R Support Staff Leaves and Absences
- Policy BA School Board Operational Goals
- Policy BB Board Legal Status
- Policy BBA Board Powers and Duties
- Policy BBAA Board Member Authority and Responsibilities
- Policy BBB Board Membership/Elections
- Policy BBBA Board Member Qualifications
- Policy BBBB Oath of Office
- Policy BBBC Board Member Resignation
- Policy BCB Board Member Conflict of Interest
- Policy BEDI News Media Services at Board Meetings
- Policy BG School Board Policy Process
- Policy BGC/BGD Policy Revision and Review/Board Review of Administrative Rules
- Policy BHC Board/Staff Communications
- Policy BIA/BIB New Member Orientation/Board Member Development Opportunities
- Policy BID Board Member Compensation and Expenses
- Policy BIE Board Member Insurance/Liability
- Policy BJ School Board Legislative Program
- Policy BK School Board Membership in Professional Associations

Mr. Jenkins moved, with a second by Mr. Nelson, to approve the Second Reading of 20 Policies, 2 Administrative Rules as presented by Ms. Keller. Passed unanimously.

Mr. George Kiernan, Chief of Operations and Communications, presented to the Board the 2026-2027 Academic Calendar A for First Reading.

Mr. Nelson moved, with a second by Ms. Fredrick, to approve the 2026-2027 Academic Calendar A as presented by Mr. Kiernan. Passed unanimously.

Mr. Kiernan updated the Board on the following Facilities Updates:

The restroom upgrades at the District Office and in the atrium at Calhoun County High School have been completed.

- A student desk pick-up was held on Saturday, November 15, 2025.
- An Anti-Vape class was held on Saturday, November 15, 2025. The next class will be held in January 2026.
- Planning has begun on HVAC upgrades for the Summer of 2026.
- Calhoun County High School track upgrades should begin in December.

Report Card Ratings: Dr. Treda Keith-Nelson, Chief Accountability Officer, presented an overview of the SC Federal Accountability System for the District. She said the Federal Accountability system ensures schools are evaluated consistently across South Carolina. Dr. Nelson said it measures academic achievement, growth, English proficiency, and school quality in compliance with ESSA.

Dr. Nelson presented the school report card ratings for the District to the Board. She said there are 86 school districts in South Carolina and approximately 30% of the districts had all of their schools receive a satisfactory rating with an average or above rating. She said Calhoun County Public Schools was included in that number. Dr. Nelson said St. Matthews K-8 School received an Elementary Score of Average, and a Middle Score of Good; Sandy Run Elementary received an Elementary Score of Average and a Middle Score of Average; and Calhoun County High School received a score of Good.

Mr. Mark Parker presented Technology Updates to the Board. He thanked the Board for their support in allowing the eSports Team to attend the Annual Technology Conference. Mr. Parker said two-factor authentication will begin on Tuesday, December 2, 2025. He added that a new firewall will be installed on Tuesday, November 18, 2025.

Dr. Tullock shared Superintendent Updates with the Board. He shared the following assessment highlights regarding the School's Report Card Ratings:

- He said all schools have earned Average or Good ratings on the State Report Card.
- ELA scores continue to rise: Grades 3,4,5,6, and 8 all saw increases in the Meets and Exceeds category. Grade 3 saw a decrease of 20.8% in the number of students performing in the Does Not Meet category.
- Grade 8 outperformed the State average in the Meets category. The State was 32.9% and the District was 34%.
- Grade 3 was 1.8% from the State (30.8%) Meets.
- Grade 6 was 0.9% from the State (30.9%) Meets
- Grade 7 was 0.1% from the State (38.1%) Meets.
- Math continued to be the challenge for the District as well as the State and Nation.
- Grade 6 outperformed the State average in the Meets category. The State is 19.7% and the District is 23%.
- In the Meets and Exceeds category, grade 6 was 39% and the State is 39.4%.

Dr. Tullock said the District is performing right along with the State.

Dr. Tullock shared EOC Highlights:

- Algebra I saw 46.15% students scored C or better. Down from 55.96% (-9.81%)
- Biology saw 16.95% students scored C or better. Down from 43.99% (-18.04%)
- English II saw 65.52% students scored C or better. Down from 68.94% (-3.42%)
- US History saw 27.62% scored C or better. Up from 13.64% (13.98%)

Dr. Tullock shared with the Board that 93% of students in the State's public school system attend brick and mortar schools and the remaining 7% attend Charter Schools (brick and mortar and virtual); however, funding is being split 49% to charter schools and 51% to traditional school systems. He said he wanted the Board to be aware, and he would have further discussion regarding this in the future.

Dr. Tullock shared with the Board that in their packets, they have the JV Boys, Varsity Girls, and Varsity Boys' Basketball Schedules. He asked everyone to come out and support the student athletes and coaches.

Dr. Tullock asked everyone to remember the Circle of Excellence Program that will be held on November 18, 2025 at 1:30 p.m. in the Auditorium at Calhoun County High School. He thanked the Human Resources Department for planning the experience, where the District will have the opportunity to recognize and thank staff for their contributions to the District. He thanked Ms. Keller, Mrs. Williams, Ms. Jenkins, and Ms. Williford for their contributions to the event.

Dr. Tullock asked the Board to consider recognizing all staff members employed by the District as of Wednesday, November 19, 2025, with a monetary Holiday incentive bonus of \$1,000 before taxes. He said there is a total of 273 employees.

Mr. Jenkins moved, with a second by Ms. Fredrick, to approve the \$1,000.00 Holiday Incentive Bonus as presented by the Superintendent. Passed unanimously.

Dr. Tullock wished everyone a warm Thanksgiving Holiday. He added that the District will be closed Monday, November 24, 2025 through Friday, November 28, 2025. He said students and staff will return to the classrooms on Monday, December 1, 2025.

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, the Superintendent's Evaluation, and then return to open session after discussions. Passed unanimously.

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

Board Action(s): No Action Taken

Adjournment: Mr. Nelson moved, with a second by Ms. Fredrick, to adjourn at 10:11 P.M. Passed unanimously.

Dana Finner

Board of Trustees Secretary

12-15-25

Date of Approval

Respectfully Submitted,
Pamela Kennedy
Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent