



Florence County School District 3

Board Meeting

Minutes

Location: FSD3 Board Room

Thursday, August 19, 2021

6:30 p.m.

In Attendance: Barbara Bryant, Julia Mims, Paula Morris, Rutha Frieson and Gloria Robinson. Almeta Fleming and Jac'Kel Brown were in attendance via the telephone conference.

Absent: Mattie Thomas

Call to Order: Board Chair, Barbara Bryant called the August 19, 2021 board meeting of the Florence County School District Three Board of Trustees to order. In accordance with the S. C. Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-809d, as amended, the following have been notified of the time, date, place and agenda of this meeting: Morning News, Lake City Shopper, WBTW, WPDE, & WMBF. This agenda is also posted on the Florence County School District Three website. A moment of silence was observed after which Board Chair Bryant led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the Agenda: Julia Mims made the motion to approve tonight's agenda as presented. Paula Morris provided the 2nd for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to approve tonight's agenda as presented passed 8-0.

Approval of the Consent Agenda: Rutha Frieson made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Paula Morris provided the 2nd for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to approve the consent agenda as presented passed 8-0. This consent agenda contained the following items: the Certified Personnel Report, and student transfer requests.

Public Participation: There were no requests for public participation.

Board Chair Report

1. *Report of Any Meetings/Schools Attended* – Chair Barbara Bryant welcomed everyone attending tonight's meeting. She also stated that FSD3's BOT supports the CDC and DHEC guidelines concerning the pandemic safety precautions, and she encourages everyone to wear your masks. Ms. Bryant attended the energizing opening ceremony for Florence School District 3 – The Power of One. She also attended the grand opening of the FSD3's Tutoring Center, a much-needed facility in our community. Gloria Robinson stated she also attended the opening ceremony. Rutha Frieson attended Back to School Bash. Paula Morris attended the opening ceremony and the grand opening of the Tutoring Center. Jac'Kel Brown enjoyed all of festivities, and I hope it will be a great year. Julia Mims attended the opening ceremonies.
2. *Request to Attend Any Meetings* – Ms. Bryant, Dr. Mims, and Mrs. Robinson will be attending the School Law Conference in Myrtle Beach August 20-22, 2021. Regional Advocacy Meeting – September 22, 2021/5 p.m. to 7 p.m. – Florence – Hilton Garden Inn. Barbara Bryant, Gloria Robinson, Julia Mims, Rutha Frieson, Almeta Fleming and Paula Morris.

Staff Reports

Finance Update – *Hope Gibson, Assistant Finance Director*

July Financials - The July financials are linked to your board agenda and on the FSD3 website. The 2021-2022 current budget is the final approved amount of \$29,900,845. The General Fund budget was shown by Object Code.

Human Resources Update – *Angelia Scott, Human Resources Director*

Mrs. Scott gave board members the latest number of vacancies needed for the 2021-2022 certified positions. Currently, needed are 2 in Early Childhood; 3 in Elementary; 1 in English; 1 in Math; 1 in Science; 6 in Special Education; 1 Media Specialist; for a total of 15 positions. The FSD3's Human Resource department are doing all they can to complete filling these positions.

Instruction Update – *Mary Howard, Elementary and Early Childhood Director*

Leadership Professional Development – The leadership in FSD3 had professional development (PD) with a kickoff of Dr. Hickson's address of her vision for this SY. A book study PD using the book, Turning High Poverty Schools into High Performing Schools. Lastly, the Art of Leadership workshop was given by Dr. Stephen Peters at The Continuum.

Teachers & Staff Professional Development - The PD did not stop. Over 12 workshops were available during Professional Learning Week August 2nd – 5th. Workshops included, but not limited to, Letterland 4K-3rd; Lexia K-8th, Edgenuity 9th-12th; High Achievement with Dr. Rosa Dingle, SCDE; CERDEP Training; Literacy Training; SEL Training; ELA Interventionists Training; Math Interventionist; PBL Training.

In the Spotlight - **FSD3's Culinary Arts Summer Orientation Program** – This was an inclusive culinary arts orientation program featuring Lake City's own Chef L Tasha McCutcheon, winner of Hell's Kitchen Season 13. This event ended Friday, August 13 with a quiz bowl and cooking competition for its participants. The weeklong program was an innovative collaboration between FSD3's Office of Exceptional Children and Department of Career and Technical Education to be sure that students are college or career ready. The co-teaching instructional framework was utilized by teachers Coco Floyd, Roberta Ford and Instructional Assistant, Betty Eaddy, in order to foster inclusion, access and equity.

Early Learning Opportunities – We want everyone to be aware of this opportunity is to help first-time parents of students to be familiar with how to help your child in school. These programs included Building Relationship for Success Countdown to Kindergarten; ParentChild bringing equal possibilities from the start; Waterford UPSTART Parent Orientation, which will be in early September.

30 for 30 Reading Challenge – This is a kickoff challenge asking parents to match the 30 minutes of uninterrupted reading at home. Schools are also committing to 30 minutes of uninterrupted reading during the school day.

FSD3's Alternative Educational Programs – *Ned Blake, Ed. S. Director of Alternative Programs and Secondary Education.*

Panther Academy is implementing a new instructional model for SY 2021-2022. All alternative students will receive their instruction virtually while meeting face to face at Panther Academy. All projects for upgrading of facilities have been completed. The Panther Academy staff presented at the SCSDE Alternative School Conference on August 5, 2021.

Operations Update – *Kasey Feagin, Ed. S., Chief Operations Officer*

COVID 19 cases update - Mrs. Feagin began her report with the COVID19 cases since August 1st until 3:30 p.m. today, August 19th, reported in FSD3. Currently, FSD3 has about 6% of District and/or school staff members either tested positive or are quarantined due to exposure and 7% of students either tested positive or are quarantined due to exposure. This information is posted on the FSD3's district's website under our COVID information.

Back to School Jamboree – 173 were in attendance at the Back to School Jamboree on Saturday, August 11th. This event was partnered with CommUnity. Parents received essential information from FSD3 as well as vendors were on-site to share information with parents. Donated school supplies were received by all who attended.

Textbook Adoption for New Course – Human Geography AP – The Cultural Landscape: An Introduction to Human Geography/Savvas Learning Company. Since this is a new course, we are asking for approval to adopt this textbook. Paula Morris made the motion to approve textbook The Cultural Landscape: An Introduction to Human Geography. Julia Mims provided the 2nd for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to approve the textbook, The Cultural Landscape: An Introduction to Human Geography/Savvas Learning Company, for the course Human Geography AP passed 8-0.

Addition to Student in Good Standing for Athletics – Mrs. Feagin continued her report by informing board members of an addition to the Student in Good Standing guidelines for Athletics. The added statement says: "If the student at report card time is failing two or more classes, s/he is immediately ineligible until the next report card period."

Policy IKAB 'Content and Credit Recovery' Revision – Mrs. Feagin ended her report by asking for approval by board members for a revision of Policy IKAB under the Credit Recovery section. This addition states the following:

"According to the SC Uniform Grading Policy, if a student passes the credit recovery course with a 60 or higher, the passing grade is entered as a "P" as the final grade and transcribed to the numerical grade value of "0" as indicated by the addition of the "P" to the grade scale chart. If a student fails the credit recovery course with a grade below a 60, the grade is entered as an "NP" and transcribed to the numerical grade value of "0" as indicated by the addition of "NP" to the grade scale chart. Thus, the credit recovery course does not impact the student's GPA. 4. A student wishing to modify his or her GPA shall repeat the full course for credit and not seek a credit recovery solution."

FSD3 has been practicing this, however, the SDE feedback as a recommendation for it to be specifically stated in policy. Rutha Frieson made the motion to approve the revision made to IKAB 'Content and Credit Recovery' as presented. Julia Mims provided the 2nd for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to approve the revision made to IKAB 'Content and Credit Recovery' as presented passed 8-0.

Superintendent's Report- *Laura Hickson, Ed. D., Superintendent*

The Regional Advocacy Meetings – Dr. Hickson began her report reminding board members if anyone decides they would like to attend the Regional Advocacy Meeting being held in Florence on September 22, 2021, please let her know asap in order to be sure to get everyone registered.

FSD3 received an Innovation Grant- The Grants Committee has awarded FSD3 with a \$100,000 for our D.R.E.A.M. (Developing Reachable Educational Achievement Milestones) to Achieve. This grant will serve 73 middle & high school students who were served from the original grant as 6th – 8th graders (FSD3 was awarded this grant 2 years ago) to reduce dropout and ensure graduation. Dr. Hickson stated that at the next board meeting, there will be feedback of the results from the committee on how FSD3 was awarded this opportunity.

Academic Tutoring and Homework Center – Dr. Hickson included this report in order to be sure parents are aware of this center, the resource for assistance for their child(ren) to receive any needed help with academics. This center is open and running.

2021-2022 SY – Dr. Hickson stated it has been an exciting four days! It was wonderful to see the teachers, staff members, and students glad to be in school. It is disappointing that we are still in a pandemic. FSD3 does encourage EVERYONE to wear a mask. FSD3 does have some bus challenges. Drivers are desperately needed. Our current student enrollment: PROJECTED 3K – 12th is 3270. Presently the actual enrollment 3K – 12th is 2812. That is down 458 students. We know that we do have some have transferred out, however, the district staff are working with schools and LCPD to try to locate our students because a lot have just not reported to school.

COVID Safety Protocols – Dr. Hickson again reminded board members and those viewing tonight's meeting of the COVID safety protocols. FSD3 has implemented guidelines to help our faculty and our students to remain healthy. All PPE equipment is available on-site at all of our schools. Students and staff in SC public schools are strongly encouraged to wear a face-coverings inside the building, especially those who have not been vaccinated.

COVID Contingency Plan – At the request of board member, Rutha Frieson, Dr. Hickson shared with board members FSD3's COVID Contingency Plan. Dr. Hickson thanked her for the request and shared that in the event of a large COVID spread that causes all schools to shutdown, FSD3 is presently working a written contingency plan. Hopefully, this plan will be emailed to board members next Thursday for their review.

Mask Wearing – This item was requested by Chair Bryant asked to be placed on our agenda. SC Education Superintendent Molly Spearman was Wednesday that she is encouraging state lawmakers to reconsider the law that bans South Carolina schools from requiring masks inside their buildings. Dr. Hickson has also talked with Representative Roger Kirby who supports this and has written a letter to encourage the legislators to revisit the law and to give that decision to the local districts. The SC State Proviso 1.108 currently states: "No school district, or any of its schools, may use any funds appropriated or authorized pursuant to this act to require that its students and/or employees wear a facemask at any of its education facilities. This prohibition extends to the announcement or enforcement of any such policy." Board members had a packet with survey data results from parents and staff. Estimated percentage of staff and students are in favor of staff and students wearing a mask/face covering. Dr. Hickson also shared documents from the SCSDE and US Secretary of Education (Washington DC). Currently FSD3 has a face covering policy (Policy ADD), which was put in place October 15, 2020, but this policy is still in place. The last line of this policy does state "The board authorizes the superintendent or his/her designee to amend these requirements as necessary to meet health and safety guidelines." So this is on the agenda tonight in order for a conversation the board needs to have

to either repeal or suspend this policy. The FSD3's legal counsel, David Lyon, has been invited for any questions. Mr. Lyon shared that currently there are four districts, that we are aware of, that have decided to go against the Proviso prohibiting mask mandate. In Richland One, a mayor and city council decided to put in place their own city ordinance requiring all public schools within the city to mandate masks. The County came behind them requiring all public schools within the county to mandate masks for staff and students. Today, the attorney general filed a suit against the City of Columbia with a violation of Proviso 1.108, which happened about 2 hours ago. This same suit can follow with the other school districts who have chosen to go against the Proviso. From what Mr. Lyon's is has researched that the City of Columbia is pleading that the Proviso is unconstitutional. But this suit will go straight to the Supreme Court. There has been another suit dealing with masks and higher education that has already ruled by the Supreme Court rather quickly. Therefore, Mr. Lyons does think that a ruling from the Supreme Court on whether the Proviso is unconstitutional could come within the next month. As Dr. Hickson mentioned there are legislators out there that are encouraging legislature to go back and repeal this Proviso. Governor does not have the authority, but legislature could, whether they will or not, we do not know. Questions from board members were given to Mr. Lyons about what would be the ramifications if the board decided to keep this policy in place and enforce it. At this time, the FSD3 board decided not to take action on this policy and allow the superintendent to adjust as necessary. The board did agree to hold off on any modifications from Dr. Hickson concerning this policy until the City of Columbia suit rules. If a called-board meeting is needed, board members will be notified.

Executive Session: Julia Mims made the motion to enter into executive session to discuss personnel regarding hiring, termination, resignation or potential legal matters. Gloria Robinson provided the 2nd for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to enter into executive session passed 8-0.

Exit Executive Session – Julia Mims made the motion to exit executive session. Rutha Frieson provided the 2nd for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to exit executive session passed 8-0.

PUBLIC SESSION

Action from Executive Session:

No action was needed from Executive Session.

Adjourn: There being no further business for the Board of Trustees, Paula Morris made the motion to adjourn. Julia Mims provided the 2nd for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to adjourn passed 8-0.

Date approved

Barbara Bryant, Chair

Shelia Knotts, Recording Clerk

Jac'Kel Brown, Secretary