



# Florence County School District 3

## Board Meeting Minutes Location: FSD3 Board Room

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Thursday, March 21, 2024

6:00 p.m.

**Call to Order:** Board Chair, Jac'Kel Brown called the March 21, 2024 board meeting of the Florence County School District Three Board of Trustees to order.

**Roll Call:** Secretary Rutha Frieson informed the Board Chair, Jac'Kel Brown, that board members Jac'Kel Brown, Rebecca Yates, Rutha Frieson, Mattie Thomas, Paula Morris, Julia Mims and Barbara Bryant were present. Jason Kirby and \*Gloria Robinson were not in attendance.

**Declaration of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA):** 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 Brown led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

\*Gloria Robinson joined the meeting.

**Approval of the Agenda:** Mattie Thomas made the motion to approve tonight's agenda as presented. Paula Morris provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to approve the March 21, 2024 agenda as presented passed 8-0.

**Approval of the Consent Agenda:** Rebecca Yates made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Rutha Frieson provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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: minutes from the 2/20/2024 Board meeting, the Certified Personnel Report, and student transfer requests for SY 2024-2025.

**Public Participation:** Jessica Cantley, a teacher at J. Paul Truluck, addressed the board concerning a international travel proposal. She would like for the board to consider a trip such as this for the 2026 SY. A quick video was viewed concerning this topic. Chair Brown thanked Ms. Cantley and informed Ms. Cantley the board does not rule on these types of events, but Dr. Hickson will reach out to her.

### **Board Chair Report**

1. Report of any Meetings/Schools Attended – Trustee, Barbara Bryant shared her attendance at the 2 board work sessions, 3/11/24 for the Board Policy review of section I, and 3/18/24 for the Board Budget Planning session. Trustee, Mattie Thomas shared her attendance at the Harbor Freight event in Florence on Wednesday, 3/20/24. She shared that some of the things stressed to students was the emphasis of being up to professional standards. i.e., *The phones had to be put away*. Trustee Thomas also attended the legislative session in Columbia with Rep Roger Kirby and Senator Ronnie Sabb. The speech they was great. She commented on the speeches from Roger Kirby and Ronnie Sabb were excellent. She also shared 3 bills that would be of interest to our district:
  - ✓ H3728 has passed both chambers but yet to be agreed upon in the conference committee.

- ✓ H5194 – this is the one that will take your tax dollars in the form of vouchers and go to anyone applied for in SC. This is unregulated monies.
- ✓ H4290 – banning DEI and higher education. This is another attempt to pull money from the public and exert control over administrative policies. This is currently going through the House. It is stressed to call your local state representatives.
- ✓ There was an amendment 34 to add a proviso concerning a cap on bus driver's pay. It has passed the House and is now on to the Senate.

2. Request to attend any Meetings – None.

### **Superintendent's Report**

#### **Finance Update** – *Hope Gibson, Finance Director*

*February Financials* - The February financials are linked to your board agenda and on the FSD3 website. The 2023-2024 current budget is the final approved amount of \$38,424,333.00. Items also available for public viewing is the general fund by object code of revenue and expenditures as well as by function as of February 29, 2024.

*Preliminary First Reading of the 2024-2025 General Fund Budget* – Ms. Gibson went over the district goals for SY 2024-2025. She went through the 135 Average Daily Membership (ADM) Trend with a projected 2,654.24 ADM for 2024-2025, which is a decrease of 118. This budget is projected so this is just a proposed projected for this budget. Ms. Gibson explained the Education Funding Reform: Aid to Classrooms Program. Still in the House Ways and Means is Teacher Pay radical adjustment with different increases by degree and extends the years of experience from 23 to 28 years. Bus Drivers: 1.5% - Proviso 117.142 School Bus Driver salary and fringe funding to school districts shall be increased by one and a half percent. Step Increase for Teachers who have worked at least 152 days and classified employees who have worked at least 80% of their contract days. These are for salaries only, not on stipend scales. Health insurance Proviso 108.6 updates the State Health Plan to January 2025 and sets the employer premium increase at 11.8%. State Retirement figures are to be determined.

Local tax – Millage for 23/24 SY was 234.20 with a 0% population increase. The cap mill increase for 24-25 SY is 243.85. An increase of 9.65. Ms. Gibson also gave a millage history for operations, a chart of the surrounding Florence County millage rates for 23-24 SY, and a comparison example of the fair market value x assessment ratio x the millage rate with 23-24 and 24-25 millage rates. The final portion of this presentation, Ms. Gibson presented the preliminary SY 24-25 General Fund projected revenue of \$33,671,569. Please note no numbers have been determined yet from the state department.

In the event in the timeline for this budget process will be the 1<sup>st</sup> public hearing on Thursday, April 18, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

Ms. Gibson then presented the RFP for banking services. These bids were due back on 3/14/24 by 4:00 p.m. Only one bid came in from this RFP which is the current bank for FSD3, South State Bank. There was an evaluation team of 3 individuals, Ms. Gibson, Director of Finance, Dr. Hickson, Superintendent and Mr. Donnie Boland, FSD3 Financial Consultant. The bid was evaluated to give FSD3 the same services and no increased cost. This item will be brought back to the board in the April monthly meeting. Barbara Bryant made the motion to accept 1<sup>st</sup> reading of the SY 2024-2025 General Fund Budget. Gloria Robinson provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> reading of the SY 2024-2025 general fund budget passed 8-0.

***Policy Recommendations***

The following policies in section G 'Personnel' were recommended for 2<sup>nd</sup> reading:

- GCEC 'Posting and Advertising of Professional Vacancies'
- GCG 'Part-Time and Substitute Professional Staff Employment'
- GCI 'Professional Staff Development'
- GCNA 'Supervision of Instructional Staff'
- GCR 'Non-School Employment of Professional Staff'
- GDC 'Support Staff Leaves and Absences'
- GDD 'Support Staff Vacation and Holidays'
- GDJ 'Support Staff Assignments and Transfers'
- GBG 'Legal Defense of Staff'
- GBGAA 'Service Animals (Staff)'
- GBGAB 'Lactation Accommodation'
- GBGB 'Staff personal Security and Safety'
- GBGD 'Workers' Compensation'
- GBH 'Staff Participation in Community Activities'
- GDD 'Support Staff Vacation and Holidays'
- GDQC 'Retirement of Support Staff'
- GDR 'Non-School Employment of Support Staff'

Mattie Thomas made the motion to accept 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of these G policies as presented. Paula Morris provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to approve 2<sup>nd</sup> reading to policies GCEC, GCG, GCI, GCNA, GCR, GDC, GDD, GDJ, GBG, GBGAA, GBGAB, GBGB, GBGD, GBH, GDD, GDQC, GDR passed 8-0.

The following policies were recommended for deletion in section "I" (Instruction):

- IFABB, IFBD and IKF

Mattie Thomas made the motion to delete these I policies as presented. Rutha Frieson provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to delete policies IFABB, IFBD and IKF passed 8-0.

The following policies were recommended for revision in section "I" (Instruction):

- IA 'Instructional Goals and Learning Objectives (Philosophy of Education)'
- IG 'Curriculum Development, Adoption and Review'
- IHA 'Basic Instructional Program'
- IHAC 'Social Studies Education'
- IHAL 'Religious Instruction'
- IHAM 'Health Education'

- IHAN 'Driver Training'
- IHAQ 'Career/Transition to Work Education'
- IHBA 'Special Education/Programs for Students with Disabilities'
- IHBB 'Gifted and Talented Education'
- IHBC 'Programs for At-Risk/Disadvantaged Students'
- IHBG 'Home Schooling'
- IHBIB 'Primary/Pre-Primary Education (Child Development)'
- IHCA 'Summer School'
- IHCD 'Advanced College Placement'
- IHD 'Adult/Community Education'
- IIB 'Class Size'
- IJ 'Instructional Resources and Materials'
- IJJ 'Textbook Selection and Adoption'
- IJOB/IJOC 'Resource Persons/School Volunteers'
- IKA 'Grading/Assessment Systems'
- ICAA 'Tests and Examinations'
- IKE 'Promotion, Retention and Acceleration of Students'
- IKF 'Graduation Requirements;
- IKFC 'Employability Credential'
- ILB 'Test/Assessment Administration'
- ILBB 'State Program Assessments'
- IMB 'Teaching about Controversial Sensitive Issues'
- IMD 'School Ceremonies and Observations'
- IMDA 'Patriotic Exercises'
- IMDB 'Flag/Motto Displays'

Mattie Thomas made the motion to approve revisions to the section "I" (Instruction) policies as presented. Rutha Frieson provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to approve revisions made to policies IA, IG, IHA, IHAC, IHAL, IHAM, IHAN, IHAQ, IHBA, IHBB, IHBC, IHBG, IHBIB, IHCA, IHCD, IHD, IIB, IJ, IJJ, IJOB?IJOC, IKA, ICAA, IKE, IKF, IKFC, ILB, ILBB, IMB, IMD, IMDA and IMDB passed 8-0.

The following policies were recommended for 1<sup>st</sup> reading in section "I" (Instruction):

- IB 'Academic Freedom'
- IC 'School Year'
- ID 'School Day'
- IE 'Organization of Instruction'
- IGCA 'Service Learning'

- IHAA 'English/Reading/Writing/Language Arts Education'
- IHAB 'Mathematics Education'
- IHAD 'Science Education'
- IHAE 'Physical Education'
- IHAF 'Arts Education'
- IHAG 'Music Education'
- IHAH 'World Language Education'
- IHAJ 'Computer/Technology Literacy'
- IHAK 'Character Education'
- IHAO 'Environmental Education'
- IHAP 'Consumer Education'
- IHBH 'Charter Schools'
- IHC 'Proficiency-Based Credit Courses'
- IHCF 'Childcare Programs'
- IIA 'Grouping for Instruction'
- IJA 'comparability of Services'
- IJK 'Supplementary Materials Selection and Adoption'
- IJKA 'Technology Resource Selection and Adoption'
- IKAB 'Report Cards/Progress Reports'
- IKACA 'Parent conferences'
- IKAD 'Grade Adjustments'
- IL 'Evaluation of Instructional Programs'
- IMG 'Animals in Schools'

Rutha Frieson made the motion to approve 1<sup>st</sup> reading of these policies in section "I" (Instruction). Mattie Thomas provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to approve 1<sup>st</sup> reading of policies IB, IC, ID, IE, IGCA, IHAA, IHAB, IHAD, IHAE, IHAF, IHAG, IHAH, IHAJ, IHAK, IHAO, IHAP, IHBH, IHC, IHCF, IIA, IJA, IJK, IJKA, IKAB, IKACA, IKAD, IL and IMG passed 8-0.

Due to a 2<sup>nd</sup> review of policy GCD 'Professional Staff Vacations and Holidays' more revisions were needed. Some information in this policy was not specific to FSD3, therefore the 3<sup>rd</sup> section title "Administrators and Year Round Personnel" was removed as well as the sub-section under "Vacations". In the immediate paragraph following this sub-section, the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence "Vacation days may not be accumulated beyond 45 days (state maximum for carryover)" was removed. The sentence "Any accrued vacation must be taken within the fiscal year, unless a formal request is submitted to the Superintendent for possible approval" was added. In that same paragraph, next sentence, the number "15" was removed and replaced with "10". In the

following paragraph, 1<sup>st</sup> sentence “unless other specific arrangements are agreed upon in writing” was removed and “unless a formal request is submitted to the Superintendent for possible approval” was added. The last sentence in this paragraph “Upon retirement from the district, a staff member will be compensated up to 45 days of accrued vacation” was removed. The listing of Holiday and the last sentence in this policy, “Administrative staff and district office staff who are 12 month employees will observe the school calendar holidays” was removed. Barbara Bryant made the motion to approve the revisions made to policy GCD as presented. Julia Mims provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to approve revisions made to policy GCD ‘Professional Staff Vacations and Holidays’ as presented passed 8-0.

Policy BID ‘Board Member Compensation and Expenses’ was up for revision. Mattie Thomas made to motion in increase the board members per month per diem for attendance at meetings from \$150 to \$400. Rutha Frieson provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> for this motion. With this motion on the floor, Chair Brown asked if there was any discussion. Barbara Bryant wanted to make an amendment to the motion to change from \$400 to \$250. After much discussion, the original motion of \$400 made by Mattie Thomas and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rutha Frieson was voted on. Mattie Thomas voted yes to this motion. Rutha Frieson, Jac’Kel Brown, Rebecca Yates, Gloria Robinson, Barbara Bryant, Paula Morris, and Julia Mims voted No to this motion. The motion to increase board compensation to \$400 failed 1-7. Paula Morris made the motion to increase board compensation to \$250/month. Julia Mims provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> for this motion. Paula Morris, Julia Mims, Jac’Kel Brown, Rutha Frieson, Rebecca Yates, Gloria Robinson, and Barbara Bryant voted yes to this motion. Mattie Thomas voted No to this motion. The motion to increase board compensation from \$150 to \$250/month passed 7-1.

Human Resource Update – *Mrs. Angelia Scott, Director of HR and Federal Programs*

Mrs. Scott presented to board members the current vacancies for FSD3 SY 2024-2025 are as follows:

- ✓ 2 Early Childhood teacher positions
- ✓ 1 PE teacher position
- ✓ 1 School Counselor position
- ✓ 1 School Librarian position
- ✓ 1 Special Education teacher positions
- ✓ 1 Spanish teacher position
- ✓ 1 Music/Band teacher position
- ✓ 1 Psychologist position

Ms. Scott then provided board members with copies of the contract recommendations for professional staff for the 2024-2025 SY. Within these contract recommendations are 3 types of contracts: Induction, Annual and Continuing. Mrs. Scott gave an explanation of each of these types (levels, who gets this type,

and extra information) of contracts for professional staff. Julia Mims made the motion to approve the contract recommendations made for the 2024-2025 SY for professional staff. Gloria Robinson provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The

*Instructional Updates—Mary Howard Ed. S., Director of Early Childhood and Elementary Curriculum*

**School Report** - Mrs. Howard's monthly updates began with a mid-year review of J. C. Lynch Elementary School and Scranton Elementary STEAM Academy. Principals T. J. Devine and Jami Kirby gave a detailed report of the progress their students are making in each of these schools as evident by the Fall and Winter growth scores. Each principal also shared what programs and/or procedures are working in their respective schools and what the next steps they will take to continue and improve in whatever areas are needed. J.C. Lynch Elementary is now a Lighthouse School.

**Tutoring Update** – Mrs. Tonyelle Thomas updated board members and those present for tonight's meeting about the FSD3 Tutoring Center. The Lake City site currently has 37 students from 7 of the district's schools. The Olanta site is currently serving 12 students. The Mathnasium opportunity is currently serving 8 FSD3 students. Five of the students being served were at tonight's meeting to be recognized for a wonderful growth in points and percentiles. Mrs. Charlene Papel spoke to the board about what an amazing turnaround this opportunity has made for her child and her as a parent in having someone to help her understand how she can access and keep up with what is expected from her child in school. Khloe & Zoey Speights 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students from SESA spoke about how they have benefited from this opportunity. A statement from Eulon Kale's mother was also read about her experience with the tutoring center and her child.

**In the Spotlight** – The Social Emotional Counselors led students in a week of mindfulness and celebration of each other with guest speakers, activities, and even a parade to celebrate kindness and leadership.

National History Day (NHD) has come and gone. The Junior Pee Dee Competition, which was held on March 5, 2024. Students from SESA, OES and REMJH advanced to the state competition, which will be held on April 27, 2024 in Sumter SC. The Primary Pee Dee Competition was held on March 12, 2024. Students from LCECC, JCL, OES, MSE, and SESA all took home ribbons and medals for top projects placing 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

The JPT Academic Challenge Team has won the region and will travel to Winthrop College Friday, 3/22/2024 to compete in the state competition.

**Upcoming Events** – Reports cards were issued today, 3/21/2024; March 28<sup>th</sup> is SESA's Leadership Day beginning at 9 a.m.; April 1-8<sup>th</sup> is Spring Break; April 8<sup>th</sup> is a Professional Day for staff; April 8<sup>th</sup> will also begin 3K and 4K testing; and April 12<sup>th</sup> is MSE's Leadership Day.

*Operational Updates—Kasey Feagin, Ed. S., Chief Operations Officer*

Mrs. Feagin shared with board meeting the upcoming testing dates:

- SC Alternate Assessment is March 11 - April 26 (this is for students with severe disabilities)
- Ready to Work Career Assessment (11<sup>th</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> time taking this test, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders, these are students who are re-taking one or more parts, is March 25 – April 19

Policy JICFB 2<sup>nd</sup> reading - Mrs. Feagin presented 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of Policy JICFB, Gavin's Law (Sexual Extortion) (Student). Paula Morris made the motion to accept 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of Policy JICFB. Gloria Robinson provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to approve 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of Policy JICFB passed 8-0.

Legislative Updates – *Dr. Laura Hickson, Superintendent*

Dr. Hickson shared the following updates:

- ✓ 1.52 (SED: Graduation Rates) requires a detailed plan form districts with a graduation rate below 70 percent (was 60 percent) for increasing its graduation rates.
- ✓ 1.70 (SED: Teacher Salaries/SE Average) updates the state's Southeastern Average Teacher Salary from \$58,048 to \$59,866.
- ✓ 1.8 (SED: Retired Teacher Salary Negotiation) extends the ability of school districts to negotiate salaries for hiring retired teachers.
- ✓ 117.142 (GP: State Employee Compensation) stipulates that school bus driver salary and fringe funding to school districts is to be increased to provide a 1.5 percent pay raise to school bus drivers based on the state minimum school bus driver pay.
- ✓ 1.103 (SED: Anti-Bullying/School Safety) directs school districts to implement a policy prohibiting the use of cell phones or personal electronic communication devices (one not authorized for classroom use) by students during direct classroom instructional time.
- ✓ 1.104 (SED: District Accounting Systems and Best Practices) creates an 11-member study committee to examine and propose necessary revisions for improving district accounting systems and best practices.
- ✓ 1.108 (Chapter Schools in Poverty) provides charter schools with an additional \$1,000 per pupil if the school has a poverty index of 75% or above and a state report card rating of good or excellent.

**SC Home School Enrollment Survey**

Dr. Hickson shared the report FSD3 has to complete about how many students in our district are under the auspices of Home School Associations. By January 13<sup>th</sup> of each year, all associations shall report the number and grade level of children home schooled through the association to the children's respective school Districts. (SC Code of Law 59-65-40, 59-65-45 and 59-65-47). Home School Association have to report #s but NOT any names

**SY 2023-2024 Board Meeting Dates**

The approved board meeting date is April 11, 2024 thinking that artfields would be the 3rd week of April, however, it actually the next week. On the FSD3 Parent Calendar is mistakenly listed as the 18th of April. Does the board want to go ahead and keep the board meeting date on the 11th? Consensus from the board was yes to keeping the April 11, 2024 board date.

**Enter into Executive Session** – Rutha Frieson made the motion to enter into executive session to discuss student discipline or potential legal matters, and personnel matters (possible hiring, termination, resignation, placed on leave or potential legal matters). Gloria Robinson provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 and enter into public session. Paula Morris provided the 2<sup>nd</sup> for this motion. All board members present voted in favor of this motion. The motion to exit executive session and enter back into public session passed 8-0.

## **PUBLIC SESSION**

**Action from executive session** – No action was needed from the executive session

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

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Date approved

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Jac'Kel Brown, Chair

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Shelia Knotts, Recording Clerk

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Rutha Frieson, Secretary