

## **Superintendent's Board of Education meeting summary**

### **Two-day work session, February 15-16, 2019**

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#### **Day 1 – February 15, 2019**

Chair Christina Gwozdz convened the first day of the Board's two-day work session at 8:31 a.m.

Motion to move into executive session (approved).

Public session resumed at 9:21 a.m. with no action coming out of executive session.

Motion to approve the agenda as presented (approved). The Legislative Update is stricken from the agenda because legislators are not available to provide an update.

Pledge of Allegiance. Moment of silence for Lt. Col. Matt Stover, the former executive officer at the Marine Corps Air Station who recently passed away. Statement of media notification.

Dr. Berg presented a resolution celebrating bus driver appreciation week. Motion to accept the resolution celebrating bus driver appreciation week (approved).

Chief Instructional Services Officers Bonnie Almond presented a proposed plan to reduce student achievement gaps. Ms. Almond and Instructional Services Department staff addressed the Board's questions.

To celebrate Black History Month, the Beaufort Middle School choir performed a song from the upcoming show *Harriet Tubman: A Path to Freedom*. The show, a collaboration among students and teachers from Beaufort Middle, Mossy Oaks Elementary, Beaufort Elementary, and Port Royal Elementary schools, is scheduled for February 21 at 6:30 p.m. at Battery Creek High School Performing Arts Center.

Principal Adrienne Sutton presented on the Leader in Me program at M.C. Riley Elementary School and addressed the Board's questions.

Chief Human Services and Administrative Officer Alice Walton and Risk Manager Jennifer Staton presented updates to Human Resources administrative regulations HR-47, HR-20, and 16, and addressed the Board's questions. Board members were updated on the status of a teacher who was hired in July 2018 and terminated in September 2018 after it was learned that his teaching certificate in his previous state of residence had been suspended.

Dr. Berg provided an update from the newly formed Community Project Review Committee. Four committee members shared their feedback on recent tours of schools in Beaufort County and in Lexington District 2. Dr. Berg and committee members addressed the Board's questions.

Chief Operations Officer Robert Oetting and Director of Communications Jim Foster presented a history of school start time changes and transportation issues related to those changes. Mr. Oetting addressed the Board's questions. Principals Chad Cox (Battery Creek High School) and Carole Ingram (Beaufort Middle) shared their experiences with start time changes.

### **Public Comments**

A community member spoke about school start times. Community members spoke regarding the achievement gap presentation. A community member shared his frustration about members of the Community Committee who actively fought recent bond referendum votes. Representatives from a new housing development (The Landings at New Riverside) advocated for new homeowners and asked the Board to zone Landings students to the schools closest to the neighborhood (May River High School and Pritchardville Elementary).

Day 1 of the two-day work session was recessed at 2:30 p.m.

### **Day 2 – February 16, 2019**

Dr. Gwozdz reconvened the Board's two-day work session at 9 a.m. Motion to go into executive session to discuss personnel matters and to receive legal advice related to potential claims and a threatened claim and other matters covered by attorney-client privilege (approved). There was no action coming out of executive session.

Chief Financial Services Officer Tonya Crosby briefed Board members on the district's operating budget, previewed the annual budget development process and presented a timeline for developing the 2019-20 budget. Tentative priorities for the 2019-20 budget include addressing achievement gaps, improving teacher pay to aid in recruitment and retention, and improving security at district schools. Ms. Cs. Crosby addressed the Board's questions.

John Dowling presented information on the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act and took the position that meetings of Board officers to set meeting agendas should be subject to the state's FOIA law. Motion to make all future agenda-setting meetings subject to the FOIA law (approved).

Dr. Berg encouraged the Board's Policy Committee to consider developing a policy to establish clear rules for opening and closing schools. He also extended an offer to the Board's Academic Committee to work with district administration to evaluate alternative programs in other school districts to determine how to improve the district's efforts. Motion that no school be operated, or not operated, in the Beaufort County School District without prior approval by the Board of Education (tabled).

Board discussion about attorneys available to the Board for possible consultation on various topics. Motion to contract with Halligan, Mahoney and Williams to represent the Board on general legal matters (withdrawn). Board discussion. Motion to direct the chair to form an ad

hoc committee to develop a list of firms and to bring forward a recommendation at the March 5 Board meeting. (approved)

Motion to contract with Halligan, Mahoney and Williams to represent the Board in a specific personnel matter (failed). Motion to contract with attorney John Simmons to represent the Board in a specific matter (failed for lack of a second).

Dr. Gwozdz reported getting constituent phone calls and e-mails concerning the Board's decision to allow district administration to determine attendance zones in new housing developments. She recommended adding the topic to a future Board meeting agenda.

Motion to adjourn the Board's two-day work session (approved).

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