

Anderson County Board of Education
907 North Main Street, Suite 202, Anderson, South Carolina 29621
December 17, 2024

Call to Order: Acting Chairman Mr. C. Nakia Davis called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. The Board Meeting was held at The Gray House in Starr, SC. Chairman Mr. Mike Upton carried out the remainder of the meeting when he arrived.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance: Rev. Jason Dorriety gave the invocation, after which, everyone joined in the pledge of allegiance to the American Flag.

Board Members Present: The following board members were present at the meeting: Dr. Doug Atkins, Mr. Greg Balog, Mr. David Blanding, Mr. C. Nakia Davis, Rev. Jason Dorriety, Dr. Vaughn Parfitt, Mr. Mike Upton, Mrs. Susan Binninger ex officio, and Dr. Gary Burgess by zoom.

Board Members Absent: Mr. Frank Kellam

Approval of Agenda: Dr. Gary Burgess made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. David Blanding seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. David Blanding made a motion to approve the November 18, 2024, meeting minutes and Rev. Jason Dorriety seconded the motion. They were approved unanimously.

Recognition of Media and Patrons / Public Comment Period: Mr. Mark Williamson, newly elected board member for seat 7, and Mr. Eddie Mattison, school district five resident, were present.

Renaissance Academy Report: Mrs. Binninger provided the board members with the monthly report on enrollment information for the academy. Mrs. Binninger stated that there are 79 students currently enrolled as of December 6, 2024. Seven are in the process of enrolling, which will be a total of 86 students. This time last year, there were 84 students enrolled. On the back side of the report, reasons for students leaving the academy are identified. Mrs. Binninger attended the board meeting at Renaissance Academy after our board meeting in November was held. Mr. McGowan is now looking at adding a virtual program due to disciplinary problems that have arose. This would be to help keep their other students and staff safe. Rev. Dorriety asked if we were seeing more or less truancy this school year. Mrs. Binninger stated that it is not any more than last year. At this time, our truancy numbers are less compared to this time last year.

Administrator's Report: Mrs. Binninger announced that the SC School Board Annual Conference on February 20 -23, 2025, will be held at the Kingston Resort in Myrtle Beach, SC. The School Board will be celebrating their 75th anniversary. Please let Mrs. Binninger know if you will be attending. The room blocks open in January. You must be registered before the room blocks open to book your room, or you may need to stay in a hotel off site.

Mrs. Binninger reminded everyone of the Statement of Economic Interest. Newly elected board members and re-elected incumbent board members need to file a Statement of Economic Interest with the Ethics Commission prior to engaging in any official responsibilities. If you are newly elected or re-elected incumbent board member, you will need to file between January 1 and 10, 2025. All other board members will have until March 30, 2025, to file.

Financial

A. Tax Collection YTD vs. Budget: Mrs. Binninger reported that all 5 Districts are at 13-15% in collections. This is up from last month by 7-9%. Collections are increasing as predicted. You will see a significant increase from now until the end of January 2025 as taxes are being paid. Renaissance Academy and the County Board are a little above the school districts due to payments coming in from the schools for services that the board provides.

B. Assessment Totals: Mrs. Binninger reviewed the report for assessment totals county wide through the end of November 2024 is at \$1,123,453,813 value of one mill. This is an increase of \$76,097.00 per mill. Mrs. Binninger stated that an increase in the value of a mill is due to the properties accessed at the 6% rate. As the appeals are processed this will go down at the end of December. Mrs. Binninger said that the value of a mill will start steadying in January and February.

C. Education Sales & Use Tax: Mrs. Binninger reported the Education Sales & Use Tax for the month of November collected was \$3,075,263.62. This time last year \$3,181,932.00 was collected. Mrs. Binninger stated that this is unusual to have a decrease. Mrs. Binninger reminded everyone that 20% of these funds are posted to the sinking fund accounts of the districts to rollback debt service millage. The remaining 80% goes to capital projects.

D. Accounts Payable: Lastly, Mrs. Binninger presented the Check Register for November 16, 2024 to December 15, 2024. Mrs. Binninger pointed out that one of the checks was out of sequence and that is why it was not on the check register. She provided a copy of where the check was posted and cleared. Questions were asked by board members and answered by Mrs. Binninger.

Unfinished Business:

A. Budget Process Review: Mrs. Binninger provided an analysis of the school districts. This gives different options for reports. This includes analysis of the enrollment of students, teachers, admin staff, all staff, and millage. This report gives an overall look of where they are over 10 years. This information can be included in the budget books if this were information that the board members would like to see. The board members will decide by the January meeting if this is information that they would like to be included in the budget books.

B. County Board-2025-2026 Budget Funding Options: Mrs. Binninger gave possible options to the board members for funding the County Board budget. These options are a millage increase, passing it off to the school districts, or cutting employees. The board members agreed to take these options under advisement and discuss this further at the January meeting.

C. Review of Board Policies: Mrs. Binninger stated that she had a meeting with a new district five board member, Mr. Tripp Dukes. Mr. Dukes asked Mrs. Binninger what our policy is for filling a vacancy for the school boards. Mrs. Binninger looked and did not see a written policy pertaining to this matter. Mr. Upton suggested that we contact the school districts or the School Board Association to see what their written policy states. Mr. Upton also stated that the county board's legislative committee needs to start reviewing our policies.

New Business:

A. Nomination and Election of New Vice Chair: Dr. Doug Atkins nominated Mr. David Blanding as Vice Chair. Mr. David Blanding declined, stating that he had not been on the board for very long and would like some more time before becoming an officer of the board. Dr. Doug Atkins then nominated Mr. Greg Balog and Dr. Gary Burgess nominated Dr. Vaughn Parfitt. After a vote by the board members, Mr. Greg Balog was elected as the new Vice Chairman until the next committee elections.

B. 2025 Committee Appointments: Mrs. Binninger presented the board with the 2024 Committee Appointments. Mr. Upton asked the board members to review the committees that they are on by the January meeting. Board members need to decide if they would like to remain on those committees or move to a different committee.

Executive Session:

A. A motion was made at 6:30 pm to move to executive session by Mr. C. Nakia Davis, seconded by Dr. Vaughn Parfitt, and approved by all members.

Mr. C. Nakia Davis made a motion to exit executive session at 6:46 pm and seconded by Dr. Vaughn Parfitt. All board members approved.

No action was taken during the executive session. The executive session ended at 6:46 pm.

B. Action Items from Executive Session: Dr. Gary Burgess made a motion to allow the Administrator to move forward with hiring a Forensic CPA to do an audit on two fiscal years. Dr. Vaughn Parfitt seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Meeting Date: The next Board meeting will be on Monday, January 13, 2025.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m. by Mr. Mike Upton.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. C. Nakia Davis, Secretary of the Anderson County Board of Education.

This is a true and correct copy of notes taken at the meeting.