

**Anderson County Board of Education**  
**907 North Main Street, Suite 202, Anderson, South Carolina 29621**  
**January 20, 2026**

**Call to Order:** Chairman, Mr. Mike Upton, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**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: Mr. Mike Upton, Dr. Gary Burgess, Mr. C. Nakia Davis, Mr. David Blanding, Dr. Doug Atkins, Rev. Jason Dorriety, Dr. Vaughn Parfitt, Mr. Greg Balog, Mr. Mark Williams, and Mrs. Susan Binninger ex officio.

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Approval of Agenda:** Dr. Gary Burgess made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. C. Nakia Davis seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

**Election of Board Officers for the 2026 Term:**

Mrs. Binninger opened the floor for nominations for the Board Chair for the 2026 term. Dr. Gary Burgess made a motion to re-elect Mr. Mike Upton as Chairman. Dr. Doug Atkins seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously. Mrs. Binninger asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing no other nominations, Mrs. Binninger declared Mr. Mike Upton Board Chair for the 2026 term by acclamation. Mrs. Binninger then turned the meeting over to Mr. Mike Upton.

Chairman Mike Upton opened nominations for Vice-Chairman. Dr. Doug Atkins made a motion to elect Dr. Gary Burgess as Vice-Chairman. Mr. Mike Upton asked if there were any other nominations for Vice-Chairman. Hearing no other nominations, Chairman Upton declared Dr. Gary Burgess Board Vice Chair for the 2026 term by acclamation.

Chairman Upton opened nominations for Secretary. Rev. Jason Dorriety made a motion to re-elect Mr. C. Nakia Davis as Secretary. Chairman Mike Upton asked if there were any other nominations for Secretary. Hearing no other nominations, Chairman Upton declared Mr. C. Nakia Davis Board Secretary for the 2026 term by acclamation.

**Appointment of Board Committees for the 2026 Term:**

The Executive Committee will be Chairman Mike Upton, Dr. Gary Burgess, and Mr. C. Nakia Davis. Dr. Gary Burgess was elected as Vice Chairman replacing Mr. Greg Balog.

Upon reading the proposed list of members for the Budget Committee, Chairman Mike Upton asked how many members could be appointed to committee. Hearing that only four members could serve on a committee, Chairman Upton stated that there are currently three members serving on the committee and two members who have submitted their names for consideration. Dr. Gary Burgess removed his name as a candidate for the Budget Committee. Chairman Mike Upton appointed Rev. Jason Dorriety to the committee.

Chairman Upton reviewed the current members of the Personnel Committee stating there are already four members assigned to the committee. He noted that there are two members who submitted their names for consideration. Dr. Vaughn Parfitt elected to be removed from the Personnel Committee. Mr. Greg Balog removed his name as a candidate for the committee. Mr. Mark Williamson was appointed by Chairman Mike Upton to the Personnel Committee.

Chairman Upton reviewed the current members of the Legislative Committee stating there are currently four members serving on the committee and one board member submitted their name for consideration. No committee members elected to come off the committee. There were no changes to the Legislative Committee.

Chairman Upton stated that no changes would be made to the Alternative School Committee, as no candidates were submitted for consideration. The Alternative School Committee currently consists of four Board members.

**Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Greg Balog made a motion to approve November 17, 2025, meeting minutes and Mr. David Blanding seconded the motion. They were approved unanimously.

**Recognition of Media and Patrons / Public Comment Period: None**

## Reports

**A. 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 73 students currently enrolled as of January 19, 2026. This time last year, there were 84 students enrolled. This is a decrease of 11 students from last year. There are ten in the process of enrolling, for a total of 83 students. On the back side of the report, reasons for students leaving the academy are identified.

**B. Administrator's Report:** Mrs. Binninger presented board members with certificates from the SC School Boards Association Boardmanship Institute Training Program. Mr. David Blanding and Dr. Vaughn Parfitt received a Certificate of Achievement for Level 1. Dr. Doug Atkins and Mr. Greg Balog received a Certificate of Achievement for reaching Level 2. Dr. Gary Burgess received a lapel pin and a Certificate of Service Award for 15 years of service to public education as a school district trustee of the Board of Education.

Mrs. Binninger announced that the upcoming South Carolina School Board Association Annual Conference will be held in Myrtle Beach, SC at the Embassy Suites. The conference dates are February 19, 20, 21, and 22, 2026. Board members interested in attending please notify Mrs. Binninger.

## C. Financial

**1. Tax Collection YTD vs. Budget:** Mrs. Binninger reported that all 5 Districts, Renaissance Academy and County Board are between 38% to 53% in collections of their local revenue as of December 31, 2025. Mrs. Binninger stated that the amount has increased due to the increase in current tax collections. Property taxes are due January 15, 2026, to avoid penalties. There will be another increase next month in tax revenues and then delinquent taxes will start increasing.

**2. Assessment Totals:** Mrs. Binninger reviewed the county-wide assessment totals through December 2025, noting a per mill value of \$1,181,590,242—a decrease of \$3671 since November 2025. Mrs. Binninger presented a three-year comparison of the value of one mill for the month of December, reporting figures of \$1,049,284 in 2023, \$1,118,669 in 2024, and \$1,181,590 in 2025. Mrs. Binninger presented the approved school millage for the 2025-2026 school year. This is broken down for each school district. A millage comparison was also provided for personal property and owner-occupied homes in each school district.

**3. Education Sales & Use Tax:** Mrs. Binninger reported that \$3,628,183.64 in Education Sales & Use Tax was collected in December. Mrs. Binninger stated that this is an increase of approximately \$165,000.00 from this time last year. Mrs. Binninger reminded everyone that 20% of these funds are posted to the sinking fund accounts of the districts to roll back debt service millage. The remaining 80% goes to capital projects.

**4. Accounts Payable:** Lastly, Mrs. Binninger presented the accounts payable showing the bills that have been paid from December 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025. Dr. Doug Atkins made a motion to approve. Dr. Gary Burgess seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

**Unfinished Business:** None

## **New Business**

**A. Discussion and action on scheduling a budget committee meeting:** The Budget Committee agreed to hold a meeting on Wednesday, January 28, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.

## **Executive Session**

### **A. Personnel Matter – Recommendation for New Hire**

### **B. Personnel Matter- Committee and Contract Considerations**

A motion was made at 6:23 pm to move to Executive Session by Dr. Gary Burgess, seconded by Rev. Jason Dorriety, and approved by all board members. Dr. Vaughn Parfitt made a motion to exit Executive Session at 7:28 pm and was seconded by Mr. Mark Williamson. All board members approved. No actions were taken during the Executive Session.

**Action as Necessary from Executive Session:** Dr. Gary Burgess made a motion to approve the recommendations from the administrator for hire. Dr. Vaughn Parfitt seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Dr. Vaughn Parfitt made a motion to take out section C and D, add “We Defend” instead of “identification” to the administrator contract. In addition, the date of renewal needs to be updated, and the contract needs to be for one year. Dr. Gary Burgess seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

**Announcements:** Dr. Doug Atkins announced that the State of Economic Interest needs to be submitted to the Ethics Commission by March 30, 2026.

**Meeting Date:** The next Board meeting will be on Tuesday, February 17, 2026.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:33 p.m. by Chairman 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.