Anderson County Board of Education
907 North Main Street, Suite 202, Anderson, South Carolina 29621
August 17, 2026

Call to Order: Chairman Mr. Michael S. Upton called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

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: Mr. Michael S. Upton, Dr. Gary Burgess, Dr. Doug Atkins, Mr. Greg Balog, Mr. David Blanding, Rev. Jason Dorriety, Dr. Vaughn Parfitt, Dr. Mark Williamson, C. Nakia Davis by phone, and Mrs. Susan Binninger ex officio.

Board Members Absent:

Mr. Upton appointed Rev. Jason Dorriety on August 17, 2026, as acting secretary for Mr. C. Nakia Davis.

Approval of Agenda: Dr. Williamson made a motion to amend the agenda. Dr. Williamson requested that the board go into executive session after we hear from each of the school districts, following item six on the agenda to discuss legal guidance. Dr. Burgess seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously. Dr. Burgess made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Dr. Parfitt seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Rev. Dorriety made a motion to approve the July 20, 2026, meeting minutes and Dr. Williamson seconded the motion. They were approved unanimously.

Recognition of Media and Patrons / Public Comment Period: Mr. Upton welcomed the Anderson School Districts' superintendents and financial officers: Dr. Seth Young and Ms. Cyndi Durham of Anderson School District One, Mrs. Kathy Hipp and Mr. Matthew Moore of Anderson School District Three, Mr. Dee Christopher and Mrs. Cristy Jablonski of Anderson School District Four, and Dr. Brenda Kelley and Ms. Amy Heard of Anderson School District Five. Mr. Upton also welcomed Mrs. Nancy Upton, Board Chair for Anderson School District One, Mr. John Benca, Anderson County Auditor, and Mr. Jason Phillips, Anderson County Treasurer.

New Business

Consideration of Anderson Schol District One's Bond Request: Dr. Seth Young stated that Anderson School District One's board members approved unanimously the 8% general obligation bond at their last board meeting. This will not be a tax increase for District One. The general obligation bond will help fund on going projects. It was reported that the district has additional capital needs, including slightly more than $3 million for roofing projects, more than $2 million for HVAC improvements, and, if sufficient funding is available, assistance with ongoing traffic concerns along Highway 153. The proposed bond, estimated at approximately $7.5 million, would be used to address these and other capital needs.

Rev. Dorriety made a motion to accept the bond recommendation from Anderson School District One. Dr. Parfitt seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Consideration of Previously Adopted Anderson School District Three Millage Rate: Mrs. Hipp reminded the Board that Anderson School District Three is a rural high poverty district with a relatively flat enrollment and tax base. Mrs. Hipp stated that they usually budget about 93%, but this year they studied the information and budgeted at 95%, which the 190.5 mills support.

Mr. Moore spoke about the outline process they used to establish their property tax revenue budget and that justifies the millage they requested. In 2024/2025 FY they received funds in the amount of $408,000 from a settled appeal from Piedmont Natural gas, Colonial Pipeline and Transcontinental Pipeline. He pointed out that 94.32% assessment does not include that amount. He removed that amount to show a trend of ongoing revenues. If that had been included, they would have had a 99.95% collection.

Mr. Moore stated that the district incorporated the Boat Bill at 6.5% into its budget projections and made adjustments to account for the anticipated reduction in revenue. He explained that this resulted in a reduction of approximately $366 per mill, or approximately $70,000 based on the district's current millage. Mr. Moore added that the district is effectively budgeting at a 94.1% collection rate.

Dr. Williamson asked, "How much time does it takes to collect on delinquent taxes?" Mr. Phillips answered that everything that is collected between March and October annually is for the prior tax year.

Dr. Parfitt asked, "What taxes do not get paid over a long period of time?" Mr. Benca said that it is usually a small margin of people. Sometimes it is due to a death in the family. Mr. Phillips said that it is usually two classes, one is a mobile home that has been abandoned on a piece of real estate. The second is business personal property that we must levy taxes. These are all the assets within the business. This would be in the 1%-2% range.

Consideration of Previously Adopted Anderson School District Four Millage Rate: Mr. Christopher said that in 2023 the district debt service millage was 44 mills from the GO bonds. In November 2023, the community passed a referendum, and they anticipated that the millage increase would be 16 mills to be able to sell bonds for $115 million dollars. In 2024 they went up 8 mills to 52 mills. Mr. Christopher stated that in 2025, the district did not increase its millage by the eight mills that had initially been anticipated. In 2026, they expect to be lower in millage than they were in 2023 when they passed the bond referendum.

Mr. Christopher reported that their budgeted Ad Valorem approved in June 2026 was $16,433,828, using a 95% as the target that would require 158.32 mills. This is a reduction in operational millage by 5.93 mills.

Mrs. Jablonski said that their average collection rate is 94.66%. If you take out the delinquent taxes the average goes down to 91.72%.

Mr. Blanding asked, "What does this do to you academically if you do not meet your budget?" Mr. Christopher said that they would have to use their fund balance because the budget is set, people have been hired and have contracts or look at other ways to cut during the school year, such as programs. It would make it difficult next year due to fund balance. In June, the fund balance was a little less than 25% and after August it was down to 20%. Their board asked them to carry an 8% fund balance all the time, so they can get through October. If they did not keep this balance they would have to ask for a TAN every month to get through from July to October.

Consideration of Previously Adopted Anderson School District Five Millage Rate: Dr. Kelley reported that in 2023 an outside company went to every Anderon School District Five campus to identify the capital projects that needed to be done. When she was given the figure, it totaled $246 million worth of needs. Since then, they have been very conservative and frugal with their budget. When they have money leftover at the end of the year it goes into a capital project account to help offset the capital projects. They do this so that they do not have to raise millage for the taxpayers. Since 2023 they have accomplished $50 million of those capital project needs without millage being raised. At this time, they would need $218 million.

Ms. Heard feels like 95% will be a good number for Anderson School District Five if they are still getting the delinquent taxes. If they were not, then they would be at 93%.

Mr. Balog asked, “If they had a decrease in enrollment and if so, did they get a decrease from the state and what was the percentage?” Ms. Heard commented that they did have a decrease in enrollment at the 45th and 165th days and they received a decrease from the state. Ms. Heard will look back at her records and let him know the percentage.

Mr. Upton asked, “If the charter schools are funded like the public schools?” Dr. Kelley said that the public schools are funded at 75/25% and the charter schools are funded 100%.

Executive Session
A motion was made at 7:23 pm to move to Executive Session for a discussion on legal guidance by Dr. Burgess, seconded by Rev. Dorriety, and approved by all board members.

Rev. Dorriety made a motion to exit Executive Session at 7:44 pm and was seconded by Dr. Willamson. All board members approved unanimously. No action was taken during Executive Session, and it ended at 7:44 pm.

The Board reconvened in regular session at 7:46 pm.

Mr. Blanding left the meeting due to a prior scheduled meeting.

Consideration to Amend District Three Millage Rate: Rev. Dorriety made a motion for Anderson County Board of Education to amend its action taken at the July 2026 Board meeting establishing the 2026-2027 operating tax millage for Anderson School District Three, and that the previously approved millage of 185.1 be changed to 189.56 mills to include the delinquent taxes back into the equation at 95%.

The amended millage is adopted pursuant to the authority granted to the Anderson County Board of Education under Act 269 of 1989, as amended by Act 581 of 1994, and after consideration of Anderson School District Three’s recommendation of 190.5 mills, the district’s Board-approved Ad Valorem Budget, the certified assessment values provided by the Anderson County Auditor, projected tax collections, and other relevant financial information presented to the Board.

Rev. Dorriety further moved that the Administrator be authorized to certify the amended millage to the Anderson County Auditor and provide any necessary supporting documentation for implementation for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. Dr. Williamson seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Consideration to Amend District Four Millage Rate: Dr. Burgess made a motion for Anderson County Board of Education to amend its action taken at the July 2026 Board meeting establishing the 2026-2027 operating tax millage for Anderson School District Four, and that the previously approved millage of 154 be changed to 158.32 mills.

The amended millage is adopted pursuant to the authority granted to the Anderson County Board of Education under Act 269 of 1989, as amended by Act 581 of 1994, and after consideration of Anderson School District Four’s recommendation of 158.32 mills, the district’s Board-approved Ad Valorem Budget, the certified assessment values provided by the Anderson County Auditor, projected tax collections, and other relevant financial information presented to the Board.

Dr. Burgess further moved that the Administrator be authorized to certify the amended millage to the Anderson County Auditor and provide any necessary supporting documentation for implementation for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. Rev. Dorriety seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Consideration to Amend District Five Millage Rate: Mr. Balog made a motion for Anderson County Board of Education to amend its action taken at the July 2026 Board meeting establishing the 2026-2027 operating tax millage for Anderson School District Five, and that the previously approved millage of 185.3 be changed to 188.38 mills.

The amended millage is adopted pursuant to the authority granted to the Anderson County Board of Education under Act 269 of 1989, as amended by Act 581 of 1994, and after consideration of Anderson School District Five's recommendation of 188.38 mills, the district's Board-approved Ad Valorem Budget, the certified assessment values provided by the Anderson County Auditor, projected tax collections, and other relevant financial information presented to the Board.

Mr. Balog further moved that the Administrator be authorized to certify the amended millage to the Anderson County Auditor and provide any necessary supporting documentation for implementation for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. Dr. Williamson seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Mr. Davis left the meeting due to a prior scheduled conference.

Reports

A. Renaissance Academy Report: Mrs. Binninger provided the board members with the monthly report on enrollment information for the academy. Mrs. Binninger announced that there are 80 students currently enrolled as of August 17, 2026. This time last year, there were 73 students enrolled. This is an increase of 7 students from last year. There are 10 students in the process of enrolling. On the back side of the report, reasons for students leaving the academy are identified.

B. Administrator's Report: Mrs. Binninger provided a legislative update. The lawmakers approved a $15 billion compromise FY 2026-2027 state budget, which now heads to the Governor for consideration and potential line-item vetoes.

C. Financial
1. Tax Collection YTD vs. Budget: Mrs. Binninger would like to change this report so that it is more accurate. The revenue in this report is going back to fiscal year 2025/2026. With the board's permission she would like this report to show the actual numbers of what revenue goes with the districts budgets versus this report. Mr. Upton asked Mrs. Binninger to start working on the new report.

2. Assessment Totals: Mrs. Binninger reviewed the county-wide assessment totals through July 31, 2026, noting a per mill value of $1,176,971,430, an increase of $698 since June 2026. Mrs. Binninger presented a three-year comparison of the value of one mill for the month of June, reporting an increase of 6% from 2024 to 2025, and an increase of approximately 5% from 2025 to 2026.

Mrs. Binninger also reviewed the operational millage value by district report. District One's current value of a mill is $178,780, this has gone up $199 from last month. District Two's value of a mill is $51,651; this has increased by $99 over the previous month. District Three's value of a mill is $41,038, an increase of $278. District Four's value of a mill is $109,444, an increase of $178. District Five's value of a mill is $283,482, an increase of $28 over last month.

Mrs. Binninger used this information to give the board members the operational millage rates for each district and how they have changed from January 2024 to July 2026.

3. Education Sales & Use Tax: Mrs. Binninger reported that $3,576,700.29 in Education Sales & Use Tax was collected in July. 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: Mrs. Binninger presented the accounts payable showing the bills that have been paid in July 2026. Mrs. Binninger pointed out that there are two checks that were posted for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Mr. Balog made a motion to pay the bills. Dr. Parfitt seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Executive Session: Mr. Upton noted that an Executive Session was on the agenda for the discussion of employee compensation pursuant to S.C. Code 30-4-70(a)(1). A motion was made at 8:06 pm to move to Executive Session by Rev. Dorriety, seconded by Dr. Burgess, and approved by all board members.

Rev. Dorriety made a motion to exit Executive Session at 8:16 pm and was seconded by Dr. Burgess. All board members approved unanimously. No action was taken during Executive Session, and it ended at 8:16 pm.

The Board reconvened in regular session at 8:17 pm.

Consideration of Action Regarding Employee Compensation: Dr. Parfitt made a motion that the Board approve an amendment to Administrator's contract for the current fiscal year to set the Administrator's annual salary at $145,000 effective July 1, 2026, and apply retroactively to that date and authorize the Board Chair to execute the necessary contract amendment.

Mr. Upton asked, "If this is a combined salary with the County Board and the Renaissance Academy?" Mr. Parfitt responded that is correct.

Dr. Atkins seconded the motion, and it was approved with six yes votes and one opposed by Dr. Williamson.

Announcements:
Assignment of a Committee by the Board Chair to Address the Annual Budget Workbook: Mr. Upton appointed the Board members who had volunteered to serve on the committee. Rev. Dorriety, Dr. Williamson, Dr. Parfitt, and Mr. Balog were appointed to serve.

Meeting Date: The next board meeting will be on Monday, September 21, 2026.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m. by Chairman Mr. Michael S. Upton.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Jason Dorriety as acting secretary for 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.