

**HORRY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
***MINUTES – Board Meeting***  
***District Office***  
***February 23, 2015***

The following persons were present:

**Board of Education**

Joe DeFeo, Chairman	Holly Heniford	John Poston
David Cox, Vice-Chair	Neil James	Sherrie Todd
Jeffrey Garland	Kay Loftus	Ray Winters
Janet Graham	Janice Morreale	

**Horry County Schools Staff**

Megan Acre	Jaime Cech	Melissa Gause	Candace Lane	Buffy Roberts
Velna Allen	Dena Chatfield	Kenny Generette	James LaPier	Angela Rush
Gretchen Almeida	Carolyn Chestnut	Buddy George	Cara LaPier	Donna Satterley
Cindy Ambrose	Janice Christy	Debra Gerrald	Allyson Larrimore	Barbara Schlidt
Barbara Ammons	Deb Colliver	Angela Gore	Mollie Laut	Beth Selander
Jacqueline Anderson	Lisa Colvard	Michelle Graham	Cindy Magrath	Kim Shaw
Christel Arnette	Meagen Cox	Melissa Graham	Sandra Matthews	Heather Sheehan
Ashley Arthur	Edi Cox	Ann Hall	Rick Maxey	Judy Shelley
Andrew Ball	Jake Cox	Kristie Hamilton	Felisa McDavid	Angie Smith
Kelley Baxley	Samantha Coy	Marti Hancock	Aimee McElveen	Rhonda Snowden
Judy Beard	Kristy Crick	Teal Harding	Dawn McKinney	Judy Stall
Rebecca Bittigar	David Cupolo	Shannon Harris	Jennifer Mew	David Stoudenmire
Diandra Blanding	Heather Daminov	Jeri Hemmelsbach	Doreen Miranda	Addie Swinney
Ashley Blankenship	Maquitta Davis	Robert Homer	Courtney Moreland	Diane Thompson
Edward Boyd	Millie Deegan	Mary Howell	Tammy Moreland	Olga Toggas
Tammy Boyd	Dennis Devorick	Charles Hucks	Susan Moriarty	Taya Toscani
Dwight Boykin	Krissy Dowling	Jessica Hucks	Carrie Mott	Joey Trail
Daryl Brown	Jennifer Dragotta	Leslie Huggins	Boone Myrick	Lora Tyler
Dottie Brown	Gaye Driggers	Angela Huggins	Cece Nance	Cathie Tyler
Josh Brown	Sarah Dunn	Tammy Hughes	Rachel Nobles	Vicki Underwood
Beth Brown	Michelle Dunsford	Natalie Hunnell	Jennifer Parker	Frann Waldorf
Grace Burleson	Morgan Emsley	Laurie Jackson	Beverly Pilkey	John Washburn
Meeghan Canady	Laura Farmer	Lee James	Chris Plowman	John Williams
Eric Caputo	Lacy Floyd	Amanda Johnson	Mark Porter	Kelley Wiltrout
Cheryllum Cardlin	Martha Fout	Angela Johnson	Ben Prince	Sam Wood
Sandy Carland	John Gardner	Ashley Johnson	Crystal Reissman	April Zeltwanger
Anna Carroll	Ashley Gasperson	Jackuqeline Kennedy	Lucas Richardson	
Jill Carroll	Reggie Gasque	Steve Kirkman	Beth Richardson	

**Opening February 23, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. – Call to Order  
Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, and Presentation of Colors**

Chairman DeFeo called the meeting to order.

Mr. James offered the invocation. Conway High School Navy JROTC presented the colors and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Agenda**

A motion was made by Mr. Cox and seconded by Mr. James to approve the agenda as published. The motion carried unanimously.

*As required by SC Law 30-4-80, local news media were informed of the date, time, place, and agenda of this meeting. Copies of the agenda were posted at the district office and distributed to schools for posting.*

**Approval of February 9, 2015, Minutes**

A motion was made by Mrs. Graham and seconded by Mr. Poston to approve the February 9, 2015, Minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**Recognitions**

**Myrtle Beach High School's Girls Tennis Team Wins State Championship**

Teal Harding, along with Velna Allen, Daryl Brown, and John Washburn, recognized the individual players as well as the coach of the Myrtle Beach High School's Girls Tennis team for having won the 2014 Lower State 3-A Championship. Elizabeth Truluck, who was selected as the South Carolina Sportsmanship Player of the Year by the United States Tennis Association, was recognized for her accomplishment. Coach Hemmelsbach was recognized for having been chosen the South Carolina Coach of the Year by the South Carolina Athletic Coaches Association.

**Forestbrook Middle School's Mock Trial Team Wins Second Battle of the Carolinas**

Teal Harding, along with H. T. Lee, and Kenneth Generette, recognized Forestbrook Middle School's Mock Trial Team for having won the Battle of the Carolinas, which is four teams from South Carolina competing against four teams from North Carolina. The individual team members and their coaches were acknowledged.

**Forestbrook Middle School's Olga Toggas and Joey Trail Win Honors from SC Council of Teachers of English**

Teal Harding, along with H. T. Lee, recognized Olga Toggas, Assistant Principal of Forestbrook Middle School, who received the South Carolina Council of Teachers of English Outstanding Administrator's Award, and Joey Trail, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade English/Language Arts Teacher of Forestbrook Middle School for having received the leadership development award given by the same Association.

**Forestbrook Middle, Lakewood Elementary, and Myrtle Beach Intermediate are Three of Five National Blue Ribbon Nominees**

Teal Harding, along with H. T. Lee and Dottie Brown, recognized Forestbrook Middle, Lakewood Elementary, and Myrtle Beach Intermediate Schools for being three of five schools in the State of South Carolina to be chosen as National Blue Ribbon nominees. Olga Toggas, James LaPier, and Deb Colliver each accepted the recognition on behalf of their respective school.

**St. James Middle School Listed Among Schools to Watch®**

Teal Harding, along with H. T. Lee, recognized St. James Middle School for having been listed as one of the schools to watch on South Carolina's Schools to Watch® list. St. James Middle is the first school in Horry County to make this list. Dr. Dwight Boykin and Crystal Reissman, who was the lead teacher on this initiative, received the award on behalf of the school.

**The School Improvement Council for Myrtle Beach Primary, Myrtle Beach Elementary, and Myrtle Beach Intermediate Schools Among Five Councils Named Finalists for the South Carolina School Improvement Council's Annual Dick and Tunky Riley Award**

The School Improvement Council that represents Myrtle Beach Primary, Myrtle Beach Elementary, and Myrtle Beach Intermediate Schools was recognized for having been named as one of five finalists in the state to receive the South Carolina Improvement Council's Annual Dick and Tunky Riley Award. CeCe Nance, Deb Colliver, and Michelle Graham each received the award on behalf of their respective school.

**St. James High School a Finalist for Palmetto's Finest**

Teal Harding, along with Velna Allen, recognized St. James High School for their selection as one of eleven finalists for the Palmetto's Finest Schools award. Tammy Moreland and Paul Hudacko accepted the recognition on behalf of St. James High School.

**Beth Brown Wins Outstanding Counselor Award from the South Carolina Counseling Association**

Teal Harding, along with Velna Allen, recognized Beth Brown of North Myrtle Beach High School, for having been awarded the Outstanding Counselor Award of the Year for 2015 by the South Carolina Counseling Association.

**Public Comments**

Mr. James Smith, head coach of the USA-Swimming Myrtle Beach Riptides Swim Team, and president and owner of Grand Strand Aquatic Management, addressed the Board. Mr. Smith addressed the Board to bring forth the need for a more adequate community paced aquatic center, stating the concept is to create a partnership between Horry County Parks and Recreation, Horry County Schools, and Riptides Grand Strand Aquatic Management. Mr. Smith offered to speak with the Board again at a later date if the Board desired. A brochure showing the type facility being considered for design was shared with Board members.

Ms. Jane Pearce addressed the Board. She lives in the Aynor area and is the mother of two children. Ms. Pearce expressed her support of the full rollout of PDL devices in the elementary schools. She also serves on the School Improvement Council for Aynor Elementary School and served as Principal for a Day.

Ms. Connie Smith addressed the Board regarding the District's current student dress code. She believes the District's dress code is antiquated and ambiguous, adding that too much time and energy is spent trying to monitor and enforce it.

Ms. Djuan Holland called on February 20 to sign up to speak during Public Comments. Ms. Holland was not present for the meeting.

Ms. Renee Mencken addressed the Board in support of the PDL initiative and feels the devices should be placed with the elementary students in grades 3 – 5. She is the mother of six, with two children at Forestbrook Middle, two children at Lakewood Elementary, and two babies at home. Ms. Mencken stated that she is a very active parent, and serves on the Socastee Advisory Board, the School Improvement Council, the PTA, and she volunteers regularly at the Middle School and the Elementary School, adding that she is a fan and an advocate of Horry County Schools. Ms. Mencken believes the students are ready and the teachers are ready for the devices at the elementary level.

Mr. Gordon Singletary of S & W Ready Mix Concrete addressed the Board regarding energy efficient options for the schools that the District is planning to build, noting that when you are considering superior energy efficiency, there are some new technologies and new options out there. One in particular is insulated concrete form construction, which gives superior insulation values as well as providing safety for the students. Mr. Singletary left a packet of information and asked that as the Board evaluates the options for the new schools, that they embrace some new technologies, adding that ICF provides safer schools and provides superior energy efficiency.

## **Discussion**

### **New State Assessments (ACT Aspire and ACT) and Monitoring Report: Operational Expectations R-1-Literacy**

Cindy Ambrose asked that the above two items be rolled together, as the first item sets the context for the second item. Shannon Stone from Socastee High School, and Jackie Kennedy from Myrtle Beach Middle School joined with Mrs. Ambrose to make this report. A critical thinking wheel was shared with Board members. These new assessments are much more rigorous and require higher levels of thinking. The new state test for grades 3 – 8 is ACT Aspire. This assessment is for this year only as of this time. There is discussion about extending it. The test was not named until December, so we were behind in knowing the type of assessment that would be used. Timed writing will be used on the ACT assessment, and this is new for our students. The tests are written at a higher reading level. There will be a lot of non-fiction on the assessment. Sample assessment items for elementary, middle and high school levels were shared. Students will not have multiple choice and fill in the blank. They will have to construct a response, stake a claim, and develop that claim with supporting evidence from the material provided. Because of these major changes and the late date of announcing the assessment, we do not anticipate looking good as a District on the assessment scores. Every time a new assessment is rolled out in this state, it takes a while for teachers and the school systems to become acclimated with what the students will be expected to do. We are the same district, still doing the same good work. The rules have changed in the middle of the year and we expect that will impact our assessment scores negatively.

Mr. DeFeo asked that a list be provided of all the mandatory testing and the frequency of the testing required of our students by the state or federal government. He also asked that a separate list be provided of anything Horry County Schools requires over and above the state and federal required testing. This information should be given to the Superintendent to share with Board members.

Mr. James asked that in looking at the categories that we are testing for, he sees soft-skill assessment, stating that his employer has been using WorkKeys for 10+ years. There are eleven categories, of which he has never seen soft-skill assessment. Is that a combination of talent, performance fit – where does that soft-skill assessment come from? Mrs. Ambrose asked if we could get an answer to this question and provide it to him.

Mrs. Ambrose shared information on the Literacy Monitoring Report. It is divided into three areas – curriculum, assessment, and instruction. We looked at which strategies would give us the biggest return on investment and how we could really try to support the schools. We looked at all sites in the County individually and we did an analysis. We looked at who needed support in what areas and what the District could do to provide the needed support.

Jackie Kennedy addressed writing in the middle school classroom. Three areas reviewed included how a middle school writing curriculum is structured in the classroom, how students practice writing in a middle school classroom, and how students are assessed on writing in a middle school classroom. We are working hard to prepare students for the ACT Aspire, focusing on timed writing skills, and we are also addressing mechanics.

Shannon Stone, Science Department Chair at Socastee High School, shared information regarding science literacy for 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Science literacy is important in a number of ways. Most importantly, students need to be able to think scientifically in order to function as a member of society when they grow up. You need to be able to read and write and evaluate data, and hopefully students will become more perceptive about the world around them as they learn to ask good questions, read about good questions, and use their reading to answer good questions. We also want to be prepared for the formal assessments, like the ACT. We want to prepare our students for post-secondary education. We want them to be able to read and write successfully at the college level.

Mr. Poston shared his support of the timed writing assessment, as well as the non-fictional and technical writing. He appreciates that we are tying the writing into the science and history classes and going across platforms and hopes we continue to do this in the middle and high schools.

### **Board Governance**

Mr. DeFeo noted that the top three items were on a previous agenda a few months ago. Mr. DeFeo added that we will probably do a committee of the whole maybe within four weeks to have these items looked at and determine one by one if we want to approve these changes. It will then be moved to a full Board vote.

Ms. Morreale shared that changes in principal hiring were discussed at the last Human Resources Committee meeting, which was a joint meeting with the Finance Committee. A change was made this last time on the hiring process where a Board member from that cluster was allowed to sit in on the application review process. We will be discussing this at the next meeting to be sure there are no other changes that the Board wants to make.

Mr. DeFeo shared that starting an IT Committee has been discussed with him by several Board members. That is something that the Board can consider. From Mr. DeFeo's standpoint, the Committees work well, so this will be on the agenda for a committee of the whole.

Mr. James addressed the item that when a Board member cannot attend a Committee meeting, that Board member may assign his/her position on the Committee to another person for the meeting. As subcommittees, the function is to address questions before they get to the Board level. The hope is to anticipate and address the question so that the Committee can inform the larger Board as a whole. A lot of time and commitment is asked of staff and Board members. There are times when conflicts occur and Committee members are unable to attend meetings. Most of the Committees have three Board members, and therefore, two Board members must be in attendance to have a functioning subcommittee meeting. This proposal would allow a Committee member to assign their proxy or vote to a Board member who could attend the Committee meeting so that business at hand can be conducted during the subcommittee meetings.

Mr. Poston asked that item 6 be changed to state, “his/her position on the committee to another Board member for the meeting,” rather than, “to another person.”

### **Superintendent’s Report**

#### **HCS Career Fair**

Dr. Maxey shared that we held a very successful career fair at Conway High School on Saturday, February 21<sup>st</sup>. We had 339 people who pre-registered for the fair. We had 341 to show up. Attendance last year was 414. We had applicants from 14 states. We were able to issue open contracts to 21 applicants. Those open contracts were issued to applicants with certification areas of critical need where we are always looking to fill a vacancy, such as math, science, and special education.

#### **Teacher of the Year Finalists**

Dr. Maxey shared that the list of finalists for Teacher of the Year have been narrowed down to five. Those include Joshua Cutright, a social studies teacher at Conway High; Martina McKoy, an English teacher at Horry County Schools’ Early College High School; Joey Trail, an English language arts teacher at Forestbrook Middle School; Ebony Bethea-Livingston, a science teacher at Loris Middle School; and Paul Hudacko, a social studies teacher at St. James High School. We congratulate all of these in their advancement.

#### **Weather**

Due to the weather advisory that was issued late today and the expectation of hazardous driving conditions, school will be closed tomorrow for all schools and offices. We do not like to cancel school, but we do not wish to place anyone in jeopardy with hazardous driving conditions expected.

#### **Board Report on the South Carolina School Boards Association Meeting**

Jeffrey Garland shared that the South Carolina School Boards Association held a meeting this past weekend and several Board members attended, including Holly Heniford, Sherrie Todd, and Ray Winters, who were required to attend a new Board member orientation. On Sunday, the Aynor Middle School Baby Blue Notes performed. Representative James Clyburn spoke on Sunday, and the National School Boards Association President spoke on Friday, as well as the National Secretary/Treasurer. There were multiple

sessions. Mr. Kenneth Generette was selected as a speaker for one of the sessions. Technology, finance, and ethics were covered.

Ms. Morreale added that Mrs. Ambrose, Mrs. Allen, Mr. Lee, and Mr. Gilbert presented two sessions on Saturday on PDL. The sessions were very informative. She thanked these for their time on Saturday.

Mr. Winters stated there were many interesting seminars held and they were able to bring back many exciting and interesting things he would like to see some of our children have. He has spoken with the Superintendent's office and is looking forward to getting some feedback on whether we can do some of those things for our children.

Mrs. Todd shared that she, Ms. Heniford, and Mr. Winters attended the new Board member orientation session. They were in a room with 110 new school Board members from across the State. After sitting there all day, she came away with a happy heart knowing that she is from Horry County, as we are really the top school district in the State and she appreciates everybody's hard work to make that possible.

Ms. Heniford added that she appreciated the opportunity to learn and to meet school Board members from the other areas and to collaborate on ideas. She attended separately one-on-one initiatives from other schools and has come back with some great knowledge to hopefully implement in our school system and to utilize their ideas and their learning curve in the process. She found the education extremely helpful.

Mr. Garland also added that there was a session late Friday afternoon concerning funding within the State of South Carolina for public schools. Two representatives have reintroduced another Bill about equity in funding in South Carolina. There will be a lot of changes if it goes anywhere. It is back on the table again this legislative session.

## **Business**

### **Consideration of Revised Board Meeting Date (Reschedule March 23, 2015, Meeting to March 26, 2015)**

A motion was made by Mr. James and seconded by Ms. Morreale to reschedule the Board meeting set for March 23, 2015, to March 26, 2015. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Consideration of Board Meeting Schedule (July – December, 2015)**

A motion was made by Mr. James and seconded by Ms. Heniford to approve the schedule of Board meetings from July through December, 2015, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Elementary Personalized Digital Learning (PDL)**

A motion was made by Ms. Morreale that for the next phase of the PDL rollout be for grade 5 only. The motion was seconded by Ms. Heniford.

Ms. Morreale stated that she feels we need more time to make sure we are working at a better level at the middle and high schools, the IT Committee will work really well, and we still have to work out the insurance issue.

Mr. Garland feels that putting this off and changing it to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade only is just, “kicking the can down the road.” “Putting this off is not the way to go.” Given the commitment for next year from Dell and Apple to provide support, we need to proceed.

Mr. DeFeo stated that the Board was promised this was going to be paid for by adding children to the classes and we kicked that down the road. The fact is this year we are facing a \$14.5 million dollar deficit if it doesn't change. We know it will change, but we have no idea where or how it will change. The Board was also told we had enough people to handle this, and now we are asking for another \$1 million dollars. Mr. DeFeo said it is not a matter of kicking it down the road, it is a matter of it being done right. Mr. DeFeo shared that he gets complaints that children do not have their devices for well over a month. If they do not have the money to pay the insurance, then they do not get a loaner if their device is damaged. Mr. DeFeo said he is not against PDL, he is against not doing it right.

Mr. Cox stated that he would like to see the commitment from Dell and Apple first. He would like for all 5<sup>th</sup> graders to be given a device and see how Dell and Apple respond and then the next year 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> should be implemented. This is being prudent.

Ms. Heniford shared she was in support of Mr. Cox's view.

Mr. Garland asked Charles Hucks to come forward and he was asked if we had a commitment from Dell and Apple to assist with the rollout for next year. Mr. Hucks responded that we do have that commitment for one year. Mr. Garland also asked for confirmation on Dell providing replacement devices due to the recent breakage issues and they are on the way now to assist with the loaner issues. Mr. Hucks responded affirmatively and stated that Dell has responded responsibly to the issues with replacement of the hardware and manpower at the high schools. Apple has committed to the same things from a personnel perspective, but again, only for next year. We do not know if they will provide the same commitment beyond next year.

Mr. James stated that we have had problems, however, he feels we should not lose sight of where we agreed to go. We wanted to provide a PDL for grades 3 – 5. Mr. James has spoken with the principals of the schools in his district and they are behind this, and therefore, he will be supporting the continuance of the 3 – 5 rollout. Mr. James did challenge the Board and the staff to ensure there is accountability if we continue to have the struggles that we have had this year.

Mrs. Graham echoed the comments of Mr. James, noting what Harvey used to say is that we need to keep in mind what is best for the children. The parents want the devices, the students need the devices, and Mrs. Graham stated that she would continue to support what the Board voted to do, which was to provide the devices for grades 3 – 5.

Mr. Poston shared that he is aware of the issues with the rollout of the devices, as well as with the content. Conversations this week led Mr. Poston to get his eyes off of the problems we have had and on the positive things we are doing in the classroom. As much as he may fear the struggles we may face from an IT standpoint, there is way too much good that we can do for the kids to hold this back any longer, so he will be voting to move this forward and in opposition to the motion.

Mr. Garland added that the funding for the PDL is coming out of capital projects and has nothing to do with our general operating funds. Mr. DeFeo disagreed in that he said millions of dollars came out of the operational funds, including the additional million. He was not referring to buying the iPads. Mr. Garland responded that he was talking about the purchasing of the iPads.

Ms. Heniford shared that she wants our children to have the educational tools needed to get an appropriate education, but that she is fiscally conservative. She also wants the children to have the proper equipment as far as repairs are concerned, making sure that the programs are appropriate, and that we have the right device. She further shared she will support anything this Board decides.

Following discussions in favor of and in opposition to the motion, a vote was taken as follows: In favor – Heniford, Todd, Winters, Loftus, Morreale, Cox, and DeFeo. Opposed – Garland, James, Poston, and Graham. The motion carried with a 7 – 4 vote.

### **Principal Recommendations**

Mr. Cox recused himself from this vote. Dr. Maxey named three individuals who are being recommended to the Board for three separate principalships beginning next year as follows: Ms. Anna Carroll is being recommended for the principalship of Waccamaw Elementary; Ms. Kristin Dowling is being recommended for the principalship of Seaside Elementary School; and Jonathan Lee James is being recommended for the principalship of Conway Middle School. A motion was made by Mr. James to support the recommendation of the Superintendent. The motion was seconded by Mr. Garland and carried.

### **Consent Agenda**

A motion was made by Mr. James and seconded by Mr. Garland to approve the items under consent agenda, which include: A. Refunding Bonds; B. Personnel Recommendations as Required by Law; C. Approval of Requests for High School Diploma; D. Education Fund Distribution-District 2; and E. Education Fund Distribution-District 3. The motion carried unanimously.

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Mr. Cox and seconded by Mr. Garland to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



**Rhonda Snowden  
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent  
and Horry County Board of Education**

**Approved:**

March 9, 2015