

**HORRY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**MINUTES**

**BOARD MEETING**

**May 19, 2025**

**District Office**

**335 Four Mile Road**

**Conway, SC 29526**

**Board of Education**

David Cox, Chair

Melanie Wellons

Tracy Winters

Wendy Hodges

Howard Barnard

Janet Graham

Pam Dawson

James Edwards

Darrell Ricketts

**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.**

**1. OPENING - MAY 19, 2025 6:00 PM - CALL TO ORDER - BOARD MEETING ROOM**

Chairman Cox called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**a. Invocation - Ms. Wellons**

Ms. Wellons offered the invocation.

**b. Presentation of Colors and Pledge of Allegiance - Socastee Air Force JROTC**

The Socastee Air Force JROTC offered the presentation of Colors and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**c. Introduction of Board Members - Mr. Cox**

Mr. Cox asked Board Members to introduce themselves and the areas which they represent.

**d. Approval of Agenda - Mr. Cox**

A motion was made to approve the May 19, 2025, agenda as presented.

**Moved By:** Ms. Wellons  
**Seconded By:** Mr. Edwards

**Board Action: Carried Unanimously**

**e. Approval of Minutes - Mr. Cox**

A motion was made to approve the May 5, 2025, meeting minutes as presented.

**1. May 5, 2025**

**Moved By:** Ms. Wellons  
**Seconded By:** Ms. Dawson

**Board Action: Carried Unanimously**

**2. DISCUSSION**

**a. Finance Committee Meeting Report - Mr. Edwards**

Mr. Edwards provided a report from the Finance Committee meeting held earlier in the day. It was noted that the Finance Committee voted to approve the increase of the Board member's discretionary fund from \$8,000 to \$12,000 pending full Board approval. Mr. Edwards also shared that the committee voted to move the Superintendent's 2025-2026 Comprehensive Budget to the full Board, subject to changes if needed. Mr. Edwards also provided a summary of some of the highlights from the budget.

**b. Facilities Committee Meeting Report - Mr. Edwards**

Mr. Edwards shared a report on the Facilities Committee meeting held earlier in the day. Mr. Edwards mentioned that the topics discussed included the Committee meeting dates for the 2025-2026 school year. It was also mentioned that the final inspection for Pine Island Elementary School is scheduled for June 12, and the final inspection for Ten Oaks Elementary School is scheduled for June 26. Mr. Edwards also shared that the Facilities Committee voted to approve a budget increase in the Forestbrook Middle School gymnasium HVAC project. The overall increase was \$175,000 and will be funded from the 25-26 Annual Capital Improvement funds. The committee also voted to approve the integrated project delivery model for the St. James Elementary School replacement project. It was noted that this matter will be brought to the full Board for consideration.

Mr. Edwards concluded the report by sharing a video of project updates, "Building on the Penny".

**c. Delivery Model for the Replacement of St. James Elementary School - Mr. Burch**

Mr. Burch addressed Board members, requesting consideration of using the integrated project delivery model for the St. James Elementary School replacement facility, as discussed during the Facilities Committee meeting. Mr. Burch noted that this model has been used successfully in previous projects, noting that the approval of this model will allow for the issuing of a request for qualifications to select an architect and a request for proposals to select a general contractor.

**d. Consider Annual Request to Authorize Expenditures from Revenue Collected from the Education Capital Improvement Sales and Use Tax - Mr. Gardner**

Mr. Gardner addressed Board members requesting consideration of the annual request to authorize the expenditure not to exceed \$60,267,000 from Sales Tax Revenues for the direct payment of costs for Approved Projects including classroom & instructional technology, the Short-term Facilities Plan, the 2021-24 Facilities Plan, and the 2024-29 Capital Improvement Plan.

**e. Consider Approval of Locally Developed Course Numbers for the 2025-2026 Academic Year - Mr. Washburn**

Mr. Washburn addressed Board members and presented information regarding the list of locally developed course numbers for the 2025-26 academic school year. Pursuant to State Board regulation 43-232, districts are allowed to offer locally designed elective courses that have been given approval by the local Board of Trustees. These courses do not have to be approved by the Department of Education, provided the local Board of Trustees has given their approval. Per the regulation, locally approved courses must be approved annually by the Board of Trustees during a regularly scheduled meeting. Mr. Washburn mentioned that a copy of the full catalog listing of the HCS locally approved courses was provided to Board members. Mr. Washburn noted there are no additional courses being requested for the upcoming school year.

**f. Superintendent's Report - Mr. Jones**

**1. 2025 Class AAAAAA Boys Tennis - Division II State Champions - Myrtle Beach High School**

Mr. Jones extended congratulations to the Myrtle Beach High School (MBHS) boys' tennis team who won the 2025 South Carolina High School League Class AAAAAA - Division 2 state championship. They defeated Riverside High School 4-2 in the championship match, held on May 10, 2025, at the USC Indoor Tennis facility. This marks the Myrtle Beach High

School team's second consecutive state title in the AAAAA division, and the third state championship win in the last four years.

## 2. **2025 State Track and Field Champions**

Mr. Jones recognized the student champions who competed during the recent 2025 SC State Track and Field Championship.

Class A Girls Triple Jump: Tanisha Myers, Green Sea Floyds High School

Class A Boys 1600 Meter and 3200 Meter Champion: Abram Suggs, Green Sea Floyds High School

Class AAAAA - Division 2 Girls High Jump Champion: Aaliyah Livingston, Myrtle Beach High School

Class AAAAA - Division 2 Boys High Jump Champion: Julien "J.J." Brown, Myrtle Beach High School

Class AAAAA - Division 2 Girls Shot Put Champion: Destinee Vereen, North Myrtle Beach High School

Class AAAAA - Division 2 Girls Triple Jump Champion: Kaylee Kearney, St. James High School

Class AAAAA - Division 1 Boys 400 Meter Champion: Zayveon Winns, Carolina Forest High

## 3. **Summer of Learning**

Mr. Jones shared that this summer, Horry County Schools is launching an exciting initiative to keep elementary students engaged and growing as readers. The program is called **READ-OPOLY**, and it runs from **May 27th to September 2nd**.

READ-OPOLY is more than just summer reading—it's a game-style challenge where students track their progress on a colorful board, earn recognition, and build critical reading skills in a fun and engaging way.

Students are encouraged to read a variety of books—whether it's a favorite superhero story, a challenging text to build reading strength, or a book shared with family or friends. As they read, they move around the READ-OPOLY board and aim for reading goals:

- **8 books** earns the title of *READCamp Champion*
- **12 books** earns the top honor of *READCamp MVP*

Schools will celebrate student achievements with **prizes and recognition**, reinforcing our commitment to literacy and lifelong learning.

Mr. Jones concluded by stating HCS is proud to offer READ-OPOLY as a meaningful way to support students and families over the summer while having a little fun along the way.

**g. Recognitions - Ms. Bourcier**

**1. National Merit Scholarship Winners**

Ms. Bourcier extended congratulations to Imane Aboulqassim, Elaine Deng, Sean Dobis, and Alex Tabaku, all from HCS Scholars Academy High School. The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC®) has awarded these four students National Merit Scholarships in recognition of their superior academic achievements.

Last fall, NMSC named more than 16,000 Semifinalists. Over 15,000 students met the very high academic standards and other requirements to advance to the Finalist level of the competition. By the conclusion of the 2025 program, more than 6,930 Finalists will have earned the “Merit Scholar” title and received a total of nearly \$26 million in college scholarships. Additional winners will be announced in June and July.

**2. National History Day State-Level Winners**

Ms. Bourcier shared that the South Carolina National History Day results are in, and HCS is once again well-represented on the list of winners

A total of 24 projects submitted by 44 students have ranked in the top three in their categories, earning them a spot in the national competition at the University of Maryland in June. Students from Black Water Middle, Early College High, North Myrtle Beach High, and Ten Oaks Middle won additional awards at the competition. Visit [horrycountyschools.net](http://horrycountyschools.net) for the complete list. Every year, National History Day projects must focus on a chosen theme. This year’s theme was “Rights & Responsibilities in History.” Congratulations were extended to all these outstanding student-historians for addressing this powerful theme in such powerful ways.

**3. Project Lead the Way Distinguished Programs: Palmetto Bays Elementary School, South Conway Elementary School, Waccamaw Elementary School, Academy for the Arts, Science & Technology & Carolina Forest High School**

Palmetto Bays Elementary, South Conway Elementary, Waccamaw Elementary, Carolina Forest High, and the Academy for the Arts, Science & Technology (AAST) have all been recognized by Project Lead the Way (PLTW) for having distinguished programs for the 2024-25 school year.

Project Leads the Way empowers millions of students across the U.S. to unlock their potential by developing the in-demand, real-world knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in life beyond the classroom. Project Leads the Way Distinguished Program celebrates districts and schools committed to helping students own their education by increasing student access, engagement, and achievement in their programs.

**4. Government Finance Officers Association - Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting: HCS Finance Department**

Ms. Bourcier shared that the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to Horry County Schools for its annual comprehensive financial report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024.

The report was judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, which includes demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate HCS's financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the report.

The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The following individuals signed up to speak during the Public Comments portion of the meeting and came forward when called: Patricia Milley, Leah Hornberger, David Warner, Robert Urbancik.

The following individuals signed up to speak during the Public Comments portion of the meeting and did not come forward when called: Tiffany Maggard.

**4. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A motion was made to move into Executive Session at 6:40 PM.

- a. Potential Purchase of Property**
- b. Discussion of Personnel Matters**

**Moved By:** Mr. Edwards

**Seconded By:** Ms. Dawson

**Board Action: Carried Unanimously**

**5. BUSINESS**

A motion was made to return from Executive Session at 7:17 PM.

It should be noted that while in Executive Session, no votes were taken, and no decisions were made.

**Moved By:** Ms. Graham

**Seconded By:** Mr. Edwards

**Board Action: Carried Unanimously**

**a. Consider Personnel Recommendation(s) - Mr. Jones**

Mr. Jones recommended Ashley Arthur to serve as the Principal for Daisy Elementary School, effective July 1, 2025.

**Moved By:** Ms. Wellons

**Seconded By:** Ms. Winters

**Board Action: Carried Unanimously**

Mr. Jones recommended Rich Reyes to serve as the Principal for Ocean Drive Elementary School, effective July 1, 2025.

**Moved By:** Ms. Wellons

**Seconded By:** Ms. Hodges

**Board Action: Carried Unanimously**

**b. Delivery Model for the Replacement of St. James Elementary School - Mr. Burch**

Mr. Burch addressed Board members, requesting approval to use the integrated project delivery method for the new St. James Elementary School replacement as presented earlier in the meeting.

A motion was made to approve the recommendation as presented.

**Moved By:** Mr. Barnard

**Seconded By:** Ms. Dawson

**Board Action: Carried Unanimously**

**c. Consider Surplus Properties - Mr. Prince**

Mr. Prince addressed Board members and requested consideration to approve the surplus of the following properties: the former Conway Education Center, located at 1620 Sherwood Drive, Conway, and the former Kingston Elementary School, located at 2694 Highway 905, Conway.

A motion was made to approve the recommendation as presented.

**Moved By:** Mr. Edwards

**Seconded By:** Mr. Ricketts

**Board Action: Carried Unanimously**

**d. Monitoring Report: OE-5 Financial Planning - Mr. Gardner**

Mr. Gardner addressed Board members and presented Monitoring Report OE-5 Financial Planning and requested consideration for approval.

A motion was made to approve Monitoring Report OE-5 as presented.

**Moved By:** Ms. Wellons

**Seconded By:** Ms. Dawson

**Board Action: Carried Unanimously**



**e. Monitoring Report: OE-6 Financial Administration - Mr. Gardner**

Mr. Gardner requested consideration to approve Monitoring Report OE-6 Financial Administration.

A motion was made to approve Monitoring Report OE-6 Financial Administration as presented.

**Moved By:** Ms. Dawson

**Seconded By:** Ms. Wellons

**Board Action: Carried Unanimously**

**f. Consider Preliminary Approval of 2025-2026 Superintendent's Comprehensive Budget - Mr. Jones/Mr. Gardner**

Mr. Gardner addressed Board members and requested consideration of the preliminary approval of the 2025-2026 Superintendent's Comprehensive Budget as presented.

General Fund	\$678,015,312
Special Revenue	39,337,436
Education Improvement Act	47,142,010
Debt Service	139,988,270
School Building	194,104,636
Food Service	36,395,090
Pupil Activity	6,783,192
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,141,765,946</b>

A motion was made to approve the 2025-2026 Superintendent's Comprehensive Budget.

For (8): Ms. Winters, Ms. Hodges, Ms. Wellons, Mr. Cox, Ms. Dawson, Ms. Graham, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Ricketts

Against (1): Mr. Barnard

**Moved By:** Mr. Edwards

**Seconded By:** Ms. Wellons

**Board Action: Carried (8 to 1)**

**6. CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made to approve the Agenda items as presented.

**a. Personnel Recommendations**

**b. Education Fund Allocation**

**1. District 8**

**2. District 10**

**Moved By:** Mr. Edwards

**Seconded By:** Ms. Graham

**Board Action: Carried Unanimously**

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 PM.

**Moved By:** Mr. Barnard

**Seconded By:** Mr. Edwards

**Board Action: Carried Unanimously**



Amanda Plyler

Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and Horry County Board of Education