

# Minutes

5:00 p.m., February 21, 2023, Regular Monthly Meeting

## Lancaster County School District Board of Trustees Regular Monthly Meeting

### In attendance

#### Board members present-

Eddie Boykin, Casey Cato, Courtney Green, Tyrom Faulkner (Secretary), Margaret Gamble, Brad Small (Chair), and Melvin Stroble (Vice-Chair)

#### Board members absent-

None

#### District personnel-

Linda Blackwell (Elementary Director), Marlee Bos (Teacher AJM), Rachel Bradley (Superintendent's Assistant), Michelle Craig (Communications Specialist), Alex Dabney (District Athletic Director), Teryn Dalton (HES Principal), Sarah Deason (ILES Principal), Mary Faile (Finance Director), Amanda Gyemant (Teacher ILMS), Trevor Hammond (Procurement Director), Cory Hyslop (EES Principal), Lindsey Marino (Student Services Director), Angela McCrorey (Food Service Director), Jill Nelson (BES Principal), Jatana Norris (Chief Financial Officer), Kelli Overcash (KES Principal), Jonathan Phipps (Superintendent), Chucky Rivers (Discovery School Principal), Lydia Quinn (COO), Ray Sapp (Security Guard), David Small (Facilities Director), Quinton Thomas (LearnTV), Bryan Vaughn (Safety & Communications Director)

#### Guests-

Alex Sherard (White & Story, LLC), David G. Phillips (Green, Finney, Cauley, LLP), Francenia B. Heizer (Burr & Forman LLP), Bob Damron (Compass Municipal Advisors, LLC)

#### Press-

0

#### Citizens-

45

### Open session

#### Call to order and invocation-

At 5:00 p.m., the Chair called the meeting to order and gave the INVOCATION.

#### Notice to media- BCBB

In accordance with the SC Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d), as amended, Cable 2, The Herald, the Kershaw News Era, The Lancaster News, WBTV, WRHM and WSOC were notified of the time, date, place and agenda of this meeting.

### Executive session

#### Executive session- BCBK, GBC/D, GBO, GBN, DFN, FGB

The chair announced the purpose for executive session was to receive resignations/retirements/terminations, 2023-2024 administrative employment recommendations, 2022-2023 certified employment recommendations, 2023-2024 certified employment recommendations, 2022-2023 non-certified employment recommendations, student transfers, one contractual matter pertaining to CM@Risk, one contractual matter pertaining to attorney services, discussion of proposed contractual negotiations, proposed purchase of property regarding easement around Harrisburg Elementary, Superintendent and Board Relations, and receipt of legal advice subject to the attorney-client privilege.

The MOTION to enter executive session was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Ms. Gamble

The motion PASSED unanimously (6-0).

Mr. Faulkner was absent.

## Open session

Welcome & Pledge of Allegiance -

At 7:00 p.m., the chair welcomed the public on behalf of the board.

Approval of meeting agenda-

The chair called for approval of the agenda as emailed. In open session, a MOTION was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Mr. Faulkner to amend the agenda to include that the board will return to Executive Session after the Discussion Information Items are completed.

The motion PASSED unanimously (7-0).

Executive session action-

BCBK

The chair noted that the board held an executive session at 5:03 p.m.

- In open session, a MOTION was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Ms. Cato to accept resignations/retirements/terminations.  
The motion PASSED unanimously (7-0).
- In open session, a MOTION was made by Mr. Faulkner and seconded by Mr. Stroble to accept the superintendent's Administrative employment recommendations for the 2023-24 school year.  
The motion PASSED unanimously (7-0).
- In open session, a MOTION was made by Mr. Boykin and seconded by Mr. Stroble to accept the superintendent's certified employment recommendations for the 2022-23 school year.  
The motion PASSED unanimously (7-0).
- In open session, a MOTION was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Mr. Boykin to accept the superintendent's certified employment recommendations for the 2023-24 school year.  
The motion PASSED unanimously (7-0).
- In open session, a MOTION was made by Mr. Faulkner and seconded by Ms. Cato to accept the superintendent's student transfers employment recommendations. An amendment was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Mr. Boykin to amend the motion to state "to accept the superintendent's student transfers recommendations".  
The motion PASSED unanimously (7-0).
- In open session, a MOTION was made by Mr. Faulkner and seconded by Ms. Green to approve the amended motion to accept superintendent's student transfers recommendations.  
The motion PASSED unanimously (7-0).
- In open session, a MOTION was made by Ms. Green and seconded by Mr. Stroble to accept the superintendent's recommendation for Procurement Code Exemption for the following vendor:
  - Trimnal & Myers Attorneys  
Legal services specific to the closing of real properties assigned to Tax Map# 0003-00-044.00, Tax Map# 0003-00-43.00, and Tax Map# 0003-00-043.02.  
The motion passed unanimously (6-0).  
Mr. Small recused himself.

- In open session, a **MOTION** was made by Mr. Boykin and seconded by Mr. Faulkner to accept the superintendent's recommendation for the board to approve the additional capital projects to be completed by Thompson Turner as the CM@Risk Firm.
  - Southside Early Childhood Center replacement of decks & ramps for mobiles and canopy replacement
  - Erwin Elementary Loading Dock PadThe motion **PASSED** unanimously (7-0).
- In open session, a **MOTION** was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Mr. Faulkner to approve the purchase of land assigned to Tax Map# 0003-00-044.00, Tax Map# 0003-00-43.00, and Tax Map# 0003-00-043.02 and allow the Board Chair to fully execute the buyer/seller agreements on behalf of the board.  
The motion **PASSED** unanimously (7-0).

The chair reported that the board had not completed its executive session business and would return to executive session after the Discussion Information Items were finished.

**Trustee Awards-**

**• Perfect Score on 2022 State Testing**

**Discovery School**

Anna Willis (SCPASS)

**Harrisburg Elementary School**

Lucas Auxier (SCReady Math)

Prateeksha Gajula (SCReady ELA)

Shiven Jajoo (SCReady Math)

Spencer Mertz (SCReady Math)

Shayne Muth (SCPASS)

Fiona Schwartzkopf (SCReady Math)

Wesley Williams (SCReady Math)

**Indian Land Elementary School**

Isabelle Devore (SCReady Math)

Brianna Kahn (SCReady Math)

Benjamin Karhan (SCPASS)

Yash Mansinghka (SCPASS)

John McBee (SCPASS)

Kyleigh Reynolds (SCReady Math)

Corinne Sawitoski (SCPASS)

**Special Olympics Presentation -**

Ms. Bos and Ms. Gyemant gave a presentation on the 2023 Lancaster Special Olympics. The date of the event is Friday, April 21st at 10:00am and it is the first in-person event since 2019. The location of the event is the Springdale Recreation Complex. This year's event is shaping up to be the biggest to date. Ms. Bos stated they had 437 preregistered participants and will most likely have 400 to 500 volunteers. Ms. Gyemant stated that there is a lot of community involvement and sup-

port. Ms. Bos and Ms. Gyemant informed the board that their biggest need is for volunteers and for transportation. In the past LCSD has helped to provide bussing for the event to make sure participants and volunteers can be transported safely. The Lancaster Special Olympics committee is requesting help from LCSD and from the community to make the event a success.

**Public forum -**

BCBI

The chair outlined the procedures for addressing the board and invited any member of the audience to come forward. fourteen members of the public came forward.

Ms. Tonya Ross spoke about her concerns for students, Fiscal Watch, and transparency. Mrs. Natalie Lesnefsky, Miss Sophia Lesnefsky, Miss Sienna Lesnefsky, Mr. Ben Lesnefsky, Ms. Janet Caron, Mrs. Jenna McCrickard, Mr. Steven McCrickard, Ms. Demetra Cornwell, Ms. Desiree Accetturo, and Ms. Lakeisha Thomas all spoke about their concerns regarding student safety and the need for a district-wide threat assessment policy. Mr. Revery Johnson spoke about his concern for student learning and state testing data. Reverend Wayne Murray spoke about his concerns for Hope on the Hill and for student safety. Mr. Zack Jones spoke about his concerns regarding respect between students and teachers and about community involvement in schools.

**Approval of consent action items -**

The chair called for approval of consent action items below.

- Approval of minutes of **Jan. 17** regular meeting, **Jan. 30** called meeting, and **Feb. 3** planning meeting
- Recommendation to approve Early Head Start monthly financial **report**
- Recommendation to approve Head Start monthly financial **report**
- Recommendation to approve Head Start continuation grant **application**

A MOTION to approve the consent action items was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Mr. Boykin.

The motion PASSED unanimously (6-0).

Mr. Faulkner was absent.

**Receipt of Regular monthly financial reports -**

Dr. Phipps referred board members to appropriate agenda pages and recognized Ms. Faile and Ms. Norris. Ms. Faile reviewed the monthly financial reports. She stated everything looks in line. Ms. Faile informed the board that the district has a strong interest income budget for the year. She pointed out that the district has not recieved any monies under the Reimbursement for Homestead Exemption or Reimbursement for Manufacturer's Depreciation but these funds normally begin coming in during the latter half of the fiscal year. Ms. Faile explained to the board that Impact Fees are collected by the county and then the district claims them. Mr. Stroble requested a report of the Impact Fees the county has recieved so far. Ms. Norris stated that it is not currently part of the monthly financial report but that she is happy to provide that report to the board. Ms. Faile clarified that the overage on Object 130 in the Expenditures by Object report is due to the board

approved bonuses that went out in January. Ms. Quinn also clarified that the overage in Object 311, Contracted Homebound Service, was due to the teacher shortage and having to pay a third party for help provide needed services to students. Ms. Norris explained that the overage would be reconciled with the unused monies allocated in salary and benefit accounts that have not been spent since the district could not find teachers to fill the positions. Ms. Faile informed the board that Object 332, Travel, is for employee travel expenses like mileage and registration. It is not for travel for athletics. Mr. Stroble asked about Object 339, Other District Transportation, and Ms. Norris stated that she would look into the specifics of that object and let the board know exactly what is expended from it. Ms. Norris inquired if the board would like to have the monthly financial report streamlined so it might be easier to understand. Ms. Norris informed the board that there is \$1.1 million in the LGIP - Student Activity fund under the Monthly Investment Report that is unused and could be spent on pupil activities like a weight room in a high school. Mr. Stroble asked how that account is funded. Ms. Norris stated that in 2011 there was a journal entry made from the general fund to this pupil activity fund that is not specific to any school location. Ms. Norris stated that she did not find any explanation in the documents she found regarding the transfer. Ms. Norris noted that the ESSER funds plans are on the website for the public to view. Mr. Stroble requested that the deadline dates for spending the ESSER funds be added to the ESSER fund bar graph document. Ms. Norris provided the dates to the board and said they would be added.

A MOTION to approve the monthly financial report was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Ms. Cato  
The motion PASSED unanimously (7-0).

**Audit update -**

The Chair recognized Ms. Norris and she introduced Mr. Phillips who gave a presentation on the restated 2021-2022 audit report for the district. Mr. Phillips reviewed the audit process with the board as he did during the January regular board meeting. Mr. Phillips explained that the Green, Finney, Cauley, LLP restated the financial statements for the district due to further investigation by the Finance Department and meetings with the county office. The firm removed finding 2022-002 after speaking with the district Finance department, the county office, and reviewing the corrected Lancaster County property tax adjustment reports that were originally unclear. Mr. Phillips stated that this correction increased the total governmental fund fund balance by 1.1 million and the general fund increased by about \$1 million. Mr. Phillips walked the board through how Finding 2022-002 was originally stated and how it came to be removed. Mr. Stroble asked Mr. Phillips if the error was the fault of the audit firm. Mr. Phillips stated that the error was not the fault of Green, Finney, Cauley, LLP. Mr. Stroble asked if statement in the report from the audit firm that they did not provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal controls or on compliance means that the

firm does not affirm that the revisions to the audit will take the district off of Fiscal Watch continuation. Mr. Phillips stated that Mr. Stroble is correct, the firm does not know for certain that the revisions will help the district be released from Fiscal Watch. Ms. Norris informed the board that the restated 2021-2022 audit report will have to be re-uploaded to the SC Department of Education once the board approves it. Chairman Small asked how the Finance Department will be correcting the remaining finding from the audit report. Ms. Norris stated that the issue will be addressed by allowing the accounting software to automatically reconcile and roll over funds into the new fiscal year instead of having the department manually address the unused funds that carryover.

A MOTION for a letter to be comprised in response to the SDE Fiscal Watch continuation letter and to be signed by the board chair acknowledging the revised audit finding and asking for Lancaster County School District to be removed from Fiscal Watch was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Mr. Boykin. The motion PASSED unanimously (7-0).

Chairman Small and Mr. Stroble clarified that the board cannot appeal the recent declaration because it is a continuation. However, the board can ask for reconsideration due to the restated audit report being submitted to the SDE.

A MOTION to approve the restated FY 2021-2022 audit report so it can be resubmitted to the SDE was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Ms. Cato.

The motion PASSED unanimously (7-0).

Chairman Small recognized Ms. Norris and she introduced Ms. Heizer who gave a presentation on the South Carolina Governmental Organizations and its membership benefits. Ms. Heizer explained to the board that SCAGO is a non-profit corporation established through the efforts of representatives of SCASA and SCASBO. She stated that the primary purpose of SCAGO is to offer efficient, cost-effective financing programs for South Carolina school districts. The general obligation bond program is the most active SCAGO program. Since 2002 SCAGO has issued over 900 bonds for school districts representing over \$2.7 billion. Ms. Heizer informed the board that this program is well known and that she is the general counsel and bond counsel to SCAGO. Ms. Heizer went over the differences between issuing a 8% bond as a stand-alone bond and joining SCAGO and issuing a 8% bond through the general obligation debt programs. She also informed the board of the advantages of issuing a bond through SCAGO. Ms. Heizer informed the board of the other South Carolina school districts that have participated in the general obligation debt programs. She also explained to the board the process of voting on a SCAGO bond resolution and how it is implemented in a school district.

Chairman Small recognized Ms. Quinn who explained that as the board has been reviewing and updating board policies, the board policy for student and employee board recognition was deleted because it was suggested by legal counsel that it could instead

**SCAGO Membership  
Presentation -**

**Student and employee recognition  
procedure -**

**Recommendation to approve first reading of Board Policy GBD - Unencumbered Time and Memo**

be a procedure for the district. This procedure would serve the same purpose as the deleted policy in providing guidelines for how the board recognizes student and employee achievements. The board discussed the differences between making student and employee board recognition a procedure or a policy.

A **MOTION** to approve the first reading Board Policy KHA - *Student/Employee Board Recognition* was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Ms. Green.

The motion **PASSED** unanimously (7-0).

Chairman Small recognized Ms. Quinn who explained to the board that the state legislature passed a 30 minute unencumbered time statute for full-time teachers in grades K-5 and full-time teachers who instruct special education students at least 20% of the school day in elementary, middle, and high schools. Ms. Quinn informed the board that the deadline to have this policy in place is April 17, 2023. Since board policies require two readings for adoption this policy was presented at this month for the first reading and will be presented for the second and final reading during the March board meeting. This ensures that the policy is adopted prior to the April 17th deadline.

A **MOTION** to amend Board Policy GBD - *Unencumbered Time* to include "Submitted within 30 days of the adoption to the SCDE on (the date it was adopted) in accordance with S.C. Code Section 59-5-63(C)." at the end of the policy was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Ms. Cato.

The motion **PASSED** unanimously (7-0).

A **MOTION** to approve the first reading of Board Policy GBD - *Unencumbered Time* as amended was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Ms. Green.

The motion **PASSED** unanimously (7-0).

**Receipt of consent information items -**

The board agreed to receive without discussion the reports below as consent information items. The reports were emailed to board members before the meeting.

- Black History Month **activities**
- National Board Certification **renewals**
- Early Head Start/Head Start **Director's monthly report**
- Early Head Start/Head Start Policy Council **minutes**
- Early Head Start/Head Start federal progress **summary**
- Early Head Start/Head Start enrollment & **attendance**

**Gary Robinson Presentation -**

Mr. Robinson could not stay to give his presentation but will attend a future meeting to present to the board.

**2022 School Improvement Designations Data -**

Dr. Phipps recognized Dr. Blackwell, Mr. Dabney, Ms. Shigley, Ms. White, Ms. Knox, Ms. Bryant, Ms. Johnson, and Dr. Shamble who gave a presentation about the School Designations released from the State Department of Education. These designations come from Federal ESSA guidelines. Mr. Dabney explained to the board the meaning of each designation and informed them of the schools that fell under that particular designation. The designations are Underperforming Schools, Comprehensive Support and Improvement, Targeted Support and Improvement,

Additional Targeted Support and Improvement, and Priority. Chairman Small asked Mr. Dabney to explain to the board how the graduation rate is determined for high schools. Mr. Dabney informed the board how graduation rates are calculated and how they can affect a high school's School Designation. Dr. Blackwell, Mr. Dabney, Ms. Shigley, Ms. White, Ms. Knox, Ms. Bryant, Ms. Johnson, and Dr. Shamble informed the board about how the Instructional leadership teams are working with school administrators, teachers, staff, and MTSS teams to determine specific school and student needs so that proper intervention and support can be provided. The Instructional leadership teams are meeting regularly with schools to go over student data and work to implement plans to improve student learning and achievement. The Instructional leadership team expressed to the board that they are seeing engagement and improvement but that it is a process to see the growth reflected in the state report cards.

**The use of athletic trainers/EMS -**

Chairman Small recognized Mr. Dabney who answered board questions about the athletic trainers at each high school in the district. Mr. Stroble asked what happens when there are concurrent athletic events for one school. Mr. Dabney explained that if there are multiple athletic events happening on a high school campus the athletic trainer is onsite at one event and can be quickly contacted if needed for the other event on campus. Mr. Dabney also informed the board that often there is a doctor onsite at the athletic games with the athletic trainer to assist and provide care immediately if an injury occurs. This support is provided through the district's partnership with MUSC. Mr. Stroble asked if this program was available for middle schools. Mr. Dabney stated that the MUSC athletic trainer program is currently only at the high school level and if it was to be implemented at the middle schools the district would incur the cost of paying a trainer to be on campus full-time. Mr. Stroble asked about utilizing the district's nursing staff to provide support for middle school athletics. Mr. Dabney stated that Leigh Lever, the district's lead nurse, would have to answer that question. Mr. Vaughn informed the board that the Safety & Transportation department has attempted to supply school athletic events with EMTs and nurses however it has been difficult due to a shortage of paramedics. There has been better success with getting school nurses to attend and provide support.

**Upgrades with audio/video -Boardroom -**

Chairman Small recognized Mr. Small who spoke to the board about upgrading the audio and video system in the district office boardroom. Mr. Small stated that he met with a reputable contractor who assessed the boardroom and provided technology and cost options to help improve the sound and visual quality of board meetings. Mr. Small described the suggested upgrades to the boardroom. Mr. Stroble asked to include an option for speakers in the lobby for attendees who cannot be seated in the boardroom during the meeting. Mr. Small stated that the quote for all of the suggested upgrades is \$93,000.



**Bond projections scenarios -**

Chairman Small recognized Mr. Damron who presented bond projection scenarios to the board. Mr. Damron explained the Debt Capsule Report and the debt limits. He explained the process for establishing a bond and determining the factors that affect it. Mr. Damron provided the board with information on the approximate maximum amount of Referendum Bonds when looking at Mill Growth, 20 and 25 year financing terms, and level payments beginning in the 13th year at a maximum of 65 mills.

**Executive session-**

BCBK, GBC/D, GBO, GBN, DFN, FGB

The Chair called for a motion to enter into executive session. The MOTION to enter executive session was made by Mr. Stroble and seconded by Mr. Boykin  
The motion PASSED unanimously (6-0).  
Ms. Gamble abstained.

**Open session-**

The Chair called for a motion to exit executive session. The MOTION to exit executive session was made by Mr. Boykin and seconded by Mr. Faulkner  
The motion PASSED unanimously (5-0).  
Ms. Cato and Mr. Stroble were absent.

**Adjournment-**

With no other business before the board, the chair adjourned the meeting at 1:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tyrom Faulkner, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brad Small, Chair