

MINUTES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ANDERSON SCHOOL DISTRICT THREE
February 13, 2023

The Anderson School District Three Board of Trustees met in regular session on Monday, February 13, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the Administration Building in Iva, South Carolina. Those present were Mr. Owens (Chairman), Mr. Holbrook (Secretary), Mr. Bouknight, Mr. Watt, and Mrs. Arnold.

In accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80 (d), as amended, the following were notified: *The Anderson Independent*, Anna Simon, *The Greenville News*, Gordon Dill, WSPA TV Channel 7, and Greg Wilson, *The Anderson Observer*.

Mr. Owens called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was led via video by Mrs. Kalee Urban's Kindergarten class from Starr Elementary.

AGENDA & MINUTES

Mr. Watt moved, Mr. Holbrook seconded, and the motion passed 5 - 0 to approve the agenda as presented.

Mr. Bouknight moved, Mrs. Arnold seconded, and the motion passed 5 - 0 to approve the minutes as written.

COMMENDATIONS

Mrs. Hipp stated that 8 Starr-Iva Middle School Jr. Scholars would be recognized. The South Carolina Jr. Scholars program recognizes 8th grade students with exceptional academic talent. The designation is based on a PSAT score of 580 or higher on the evidence based reading and writing portion or a 530 or higher on the mathematics portion. The District is very proud of these students. The following students were given a certificate by Mr. Owens and Mrs. Hipp: Wyatt Garrett, Luke Gray, Willough Larsen, Asher Pamphilon, Abby Helms, Colton Walker, Amelia Ciempola, and Matthew Alessandrini.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

There were no citizens' comments this evening.

2021 - 2022 EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Mr. Ken Martin with Martin, Smith & Company came to speak regarding the external audit performed on the financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022. The audit approach was similar to previous years. The District did have a significant increase in revenue - primarily federal revenue - which drove audit testing higher with particular focus on additional federal programs and compliance tests. The focus of the audit is to gather enough evidence to be able to give an opinion as to whether the financial statements of the District are fairly presented. This process begins by understanding and testing internal controls. Mr. Moore has done an outstanding job over the years maintaining, improving, and strengthening a historically strong system of internal controls. The audit examination did not reveal any instances where the internal controls system was not being followed. Based on the evidence gathered by the audit team, they were able, again this year, to give an unmodified opinion on the financial statements of the District. This opinion is the best that can be given. It is otherwise known as a clean opinion. It means that the financial statements do present fairly the results of the operations of the District and the financial position.

Revenues were up to just over ~~\$40,000,000.00~~ \$40,000.00 which is about an 11% increase over the previous year. This increase was primarily driven by the ESSER funding. Fund Balance increased by \$545,000.00 - the 7th consecutive year of an increase in Fund Balance. The Fund Balance currently stands at about \$6.5 million dollars representing about 28% of the annual expenditures.

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CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Jon Willette from J Davis Construction stated that the proposed projections for the next month on the Crescent High School press box will be finalization of the building pad, pour footers, MEP underground rough-in, pouring of the initial foundation, base foundation, and begin the first level masonry wall construction. Mr. Owens asked if the project is still on time and budget to which Mr. Willette answered in the affirmative. Mr. Bouknight asked for the projected completion date which is August 16.

REPORTS

FINANCIAL REPORT

GENERAL FUND

Mr. Moore stated that through the end of January the District is in a very strong position. Revenues are exceeding expenditures by \$1,702,554.00. Mr. Moore had provided several different spreadsheets that he felt would be helpful to the Board members as budget season begins. They break down the revenue and expenditures in different formats so that the Board can see exactly how that funding is being utilized at each location. Mr. Moore did state that property taxes appear to be coming in well as compared to last year. The delinquent taxes will come into play after the March 16 deadline.

Mr. Owens asked if Mr. Moore had any idea what the Governor's proposed salary increase will cost the District if he defaults as last year. Mr. Moore stated that he does not have a good idea at this time what that will look like. Superintendent Weaver is proposing a \$2,500.00 teacher retention stipend in addition to the \$2,500.00 increase to the statewide minimum salary schedule. There have also been discussions about bus driver increases. No one is certain how the stipends will be funded.

Mr. Holbrook brought up the discrepancy in revenue at the State level between \$14 billion dollars the State thought they had and the \$10 billion they actually had. Again, no one is truly certain how this will affect districts throughout the state.

Mrs. Arnold asked about the positions that have been funded with ESSER funds when those funds have been depleted. Mr. Moore responded that discussions have already begun with principals regarding the positions and how to retain them through attrition instead of having cuts. The District has also had an increase in students which can absorb some of the costs.

SALES TAX

In January, the District received \$256,033.48. Based on the trends through the month of February, it is very reasonable to expect another large collection from the Christmas-time spending. The District did see a slight increase in the percentage received (from 8.17% to 8.33%) based on the increase in enrollment. These figures should remain in effect until the update from the 135th day which will be implemented around May.

IT PRESENTATION

Mrs. Aimee Gray began by introducing the staff of the IT Department. Mr. Hogan Crawford, Network Administrator, Mrs. Missy Rice, Database Administrator, Rick Womack, Technology Specialist, and Brandon Lackey, Student Intern. The priorities of the IT Department are to keep all students and staff safe, support the learning environment, protect student and staff data, ensure data integrity and accurate state reporting, and use technology to improve productivity. There were several major projects that have been completed in the past year. One of these projects was the transportation routing software that builds the routes for them. A new IP intercom system was installed for Starr-Iva Middle School and

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Crescent High. A new camera network has been installed with all cameras being supported by their own network for security reasons. There have been several safety improvements. Interactive panels are 100% across the District now. Four digital signs have been installed across the District - one here at the District Office and three at the High School. A network switching equipment refresh was accomplished with E-rate funds. Battery backups have been installed on all main equipment. All of the wireless infrastructure has been replaced. Phishing campaigns have begun.

Mrs. Arnold had a question about the decrease in the number of Ipads across the District to which Mrs. Gray responded that the District is a Google district and has been trying to decrease the number of Ipads and Macs across the District in favor of Chromebooks and google devices for the past five years.

Brandon Lackey, the Student Intern, has been working diligently to sell any equipment that the District is phasing out on govdeals.com. This process is very involved, but, so far, \$111,000.00 has been made just by selling these items instead of calling a recycler.

Approximately 300 Chromebooks were added last year because that many students were added to the District. There is a high damage rate especially with middle school students, but the loss rate is less than 1% which is very good.

All classrooms that need one have a flat panel currently. For those few classrooms that do not need a permanently installed one, there is a mobile flat panel in each school for their use. There was a question at last month's Board meeting about how many Dell panels and how many Promethean boards the District has. The split is approximately 50:50. To replace all of the Dell panels with Promethean boards would be a cost of about \$300,000.00, and the Dell panels still work properly. The refresh on these panels will begin in 2 years.

A FCC grant was awarded of \$60,000.00 and was used to purchase end of life network switch equipment and \$5,000.00 for more battery backups for that equipment.

Mrs. Gray spoke for a moment on the work order system and the efficiency of completing the work orders. She also expanded a bit on the new wireless access point system. There has been much emphasis on safety and security. She explained in detail the intercom system at Starr-Iva and Crescent. An "always on" kiosk (a TV with all the cameras on it) has been installed at each school in the SRO's office. Dr. Nixon, Mr. Jarrard, and Mrs. Gray have devised a workflow system for key and keycard access. The PRTG monitoring system was briefly reviewed.

Mr. Owens asked if Mrs. Gray is able to tell if the wireless access points are being utilized and how much. She stated that she is with the Aruba Central monitoring system by checking bandwidth usage. They are used quite frequently. He then asked the replacement cost of cameras to which she responded that it would depend on the type of camera and its capabilities. He also asked if the cameras are equipped with audio capabilities. The answer to this question is that most of the cameras are not equipped with that feature and the ones equipped with it have the feature turned off for bandwidth reasons as well as privacy and security concerns. Mr. Bouknight asked if there was a camera in every classroom to which Mrs. Gray answered in the negative.

Upcoming projects for the IT Department will include the District Office move along with the installation of the audiovisual equipment, wired network infrastructure, cameras, access controls, and wireless network. There will be about 630 new Chromebooks to provision this summer and about 40 security cameras in a refresh. The same intercom system installed at Starr-Iva and Crescent will be put out to bid for installation at Starr, as well. Mrs. Rice is implementing a State Contacts page in PowerSchool. This project is a huge undertaking as it will revamp everything in PowerSchool. She is also looking into a new report card format. Printers are a known vulnerability for lots of reasons, so the District is looking to virtually remove the printers from the network. There will be a lot of focus on cybersecurity and data privacy.

Data security breaches are happening quite frequently. The District is doing several things to combat this issue beginning with training. Faculty and staff should be aware of FERPA laws and the penalties for violating them. Several measures

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have been put into place for those companies that the District does business with, both physically and software companies to be certain that information remains as secure and confidential as possible. The FBI has just put out a warning that ransomware attacks are on the rise for education. Steps continue to be taken to make certain that the network remains as secure as possible. Mr. Owens asked about TikTok in particular since it has been in the news lately. Mrs. Gray stated that no District-owned devices should have TikTok downloaded on it, including District-owned cell phones.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Dr. Nixon stated that ESSER funds would be used to fund HVAC projects across 2 schools over the summer. The total budgeted amount for these projects is \$2.8 million. Iva and Starr-Iva Middle are the 2 schools, and around \$1.1 million of equipment will be onsite at these locations at the end of May. It is hoped that the bid will be secured for the subcontractors and the contractual work by the March meeting. OSF procedures have already been done and the building permits. There will be replacements of 7 Bard units at Iva and 51 at Starr-Iva. Some of the Marvair units will be taken offline. The quality of Marvair has gone down exponentially in the last few years, and there is much difficulty in getting parts for these units. They will be replaced with Bard units. All of the units being replaced are over 20 years old. Mr. Holbrook asked about a boiler system. Dr. Nixon answered that the majority of the building at Iva is served with boilers and chillers. Some of

these were replaced within the last 10 years. He also stated that when the time comes to consider the replacement of these units, consideration should be given to possibly replacing them with the Bard-type units. Mr. Bouknight asked if the District was able to join with any other districts this time to gain better buying power with the bidding process by bidding together. Dr. Nixon stated that this was not possible at this time with this particular project although it has been done in the past. Mrs. Arnold asked about some issues with heating at Crescent during the holidays. Dr. Nixon stated that the insurance was going to cover those units with brand new parts due to the fact that this system is relatively brand new (less than 10 years old), so there will be no need for replacement at this time. Mr. Watt asked about the issue with pipes at Iva. Dr. Nixon stated that a company had been hired to come in and spray a coating of polymer material into the pipe to correct some of the issues and to keep the District from having to dig the pipe up from under the concrete. At this time, this spray seems to have corrected the problem along with replacement of some of the outside components.

There was some discussion regarding the power outage that took place several days earlier. This incident was the first time that all 5 schools had lost power at the same time as some locations are on Little River and some on Duke Power. The bus drivers were notified and buses dispatched to the schools within 15 minutes. Fortunately, the power came back on, so there was no early dismissal, but it was good to know that this maneuver could be accomplished if necessary in a short amount of time.

POLICY GCLE/ADMINISTRATIVE RULE GCLE-R

Mrs. Hipp stated that in last years' legislative session, a law was passed stating that beginning in the 2023 - 2024 school year, 30 minutes of unencumbered time must be provided for all elementary teachers and special education teachers who do not get 30 minutes in their day. The School Board Association has come up with a draft policy and administrative rule which just drills down a bit deeper and covers all the requirements of the law. Mrs. Hipp is asking that these drafts be sent to the Policy Committee for review and to determine if anything needs to be added specifically for Anderson 3. This subject has already been addressed with the elementary school principals, and there are some ideas regarding this time. The District will need to pass a policy in the next 3 months and send it to the State Department.

Mr. Owens stated that a new Policy Committee needed to be formed as the current one was chosen by the prior Board. Mrs. Arnold stated that she would like to be a part of this committee, and Mr. Bouknight expressed interest in remaining on the committee. Mr. Owens, as Board Chair, then appointed the Policy Committee to be Mrs. Hannah Arnold and Mr. Tripp Bouknight.

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Mr. Watt asked if the school day for teachers would be extended. Mrs. Hipp replied that the law states that the school day must remain the same. Mr. Bouknight asked if this 30 minutes should be continuous or could it be two 15 minute periods. Mrs. Hipp stated that she did not know if it was specifically stated as a continuous period, but she knew that the intent was to be a 30 minute block of time.

APPENDIX ITEMS

The appendix items are from AIT regarding the ASE certification program. Mrs. Hipp stated that this program does allow students to compete for some scholarships. Mr. Bouknight stated that he was instrumental in getting that process started.

Mr. Bouknight moved, Mr. Watt seconded, and the motion passed 5 - 0 to enter into Executive Session for the personnel and security matters.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Watt moved, Mr. Holbrook seconded, and the motion carried 5 - 0 to come out of the Executive Session.

Upon coming out of Executive Session, the following actions were taken:

- Mr Bouknight moved, Mr. Watt seconded, and the motion passed 5 - 0 to accept the resignation of Employee A
- Mr. Holbrook moved, Mr. Bouknight seconded, and the motion passed 5 - 0 to approve the employment of Candidate A as recommended by the Superintendent

- Mr. Holbrook moved, Mr. Bouknight seconded, and the motion passed 5 - 0 to approve the re-employment of the administrators presented for the school year 2023-2024 as recommended by the Superintendent
- Mr. Holbrook moved, Mr. Bouknight seconded, and the motion passed 5 - 0 to approve the employment of Candidates B - E as presented for the school year 2023-2024 as recommended by the Superintendent

ADJOURN

Mr. Watt moved, Mrs. Arnold seconded, and the motion passed 5 - 0 to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.

Chairman

Secretary