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Monday, September 8, 2025
Regular Board Meeting - 6:30 pm

The Anderson School District Three Board of Trustees met in regular session on Monday, September 8, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in the Boardroom of the Administrative Offices located in Iva, South Carolina. Those present were Mr. Watt (Chairman), Mrs. Arnold (Secretary) and Mr. Holbrook. Mr. Bouknight and Mr. Burdette were not present.

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. Watt called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by an invocation.

AGENDA & MINUTES

Mrs. Arnold moved, Mr. Holbrook seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the agenda as presented.

Mr. Holbrook moved, Mrs. Arnold seconded, and the motion passed unanimously to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2025, meeting as presented.

COMMENDATIONS

Mrs. Hipp recognized the following staff members for district honors:

Anderson 3 Teacher of the Year – Mrs. Martina Zinn, Art Teacher at Starr-Iva Middle School.

Anderson 3 Support Staff of the Year – Mrs. Kelly Brown, Paraprofessional at Starr Elementary School.

Anderson 3 Rookie Teacher of the Year – Mrs. Jessica Blanton, Flat Rock Elementary School.

She also announced the new Bus Driver of the Month recognition program. The September honoree was Ms. Amanda McGuire, who was commended for her calm and professional response

to a medical emergency involving a student on her bus. She ensured accurate medical and contact information was relayed and demonstrated genuine care for all students. Ms. McGuire received recognition along with tokens of appreciation from the high school.

Mrs. Hipp mentioned that billboards highlighting the District Teacher of the Year, Support Staff of the Year, and each school's Support Staff of the Year have been placed along Highway 81.

The Board expressed appreciation to all honorees and their families.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

There were no Citizens' Comments this evening.

REPORTS

Financial Reports

General Fund – Mr. Moore presented the General Fund report through the end of August. He stated that, as expected for this time of year, expenditures exceeded revenues by approximately $595,230. He noted that this pattern typically continues until property tax revenues begin arriving in January, at which point the balance shifts back to positive. He emphasized that the District is on track with prior years, and while some timing differences (such as software purchases) may show slightly higher expenditures, nothing raises concern at this time.

He reported that interest revenue has already met the annual budget just two months into the fiscal year, providing an additional cushion. Property tax revenue from the prior year is still being accrued and will appear in the next month's report.

Sales Tax – There was no sales tax collection to report for August, but last year's strong property and sales tax collections allowed the District to reduce its transfer to debt service millage. Typically $700,000 is required, but due to strong revenues and the windfall reported in August, only $250,000 will be transferred this year, leaving a greater margin for capital projects.

Technology Report

Mrs. Aimee Gray introduced the District technology team: Missy Rice, Database Administrator; Logan Dixon, Technology Coordinator; Hogan Crawford, Technology Director; and Cameron Spires, Systems Administrator and Cybersecurity Specialist.

She began by reviewing summer projects and upgrades:

Over 1,000 new touchscreen Chromebooks were deployed at Flat Rock Elementary, with a new four-year refresh cycle ensuring every 5th and 9th grader receives a new device to keep for four years, with the option to own it at graduation if fees are paid.

All classrooms now feature updated ViewSonic interactive panels with wireless casting capability.

New IP-based intercom systems were installed at Iva Elementary and Flat Rock Elementary, enabling centralized announcements and teacher "check-in" safety features.

Security enhancements included VoIP phones, environmental sensors, expanded camera coverage, and monthly "held door" reports reviewed by principals and SROs.

A new Palo Alto firewall was funded through $138,000 in federal cyber E-Rate pilot funds, making Anderson 3 the only upstate district to receive this award.

Proofpoint email protection has blocked nearly 30,000 malicious emails in the past week alone, including phishing and imposter attempts.

The District's cybersecurity score has risen from 770 to 800 on the State's BitSight Insights platform, placing it in the low-risk category for ransomware and cyber incidents.

Future projects include extending fiber to Flat Rock to reduce outages, upgrading access points, adding stronger password policies, implementing specialized cybersecurity training by job function, and installing a new virtual server.

Board members commented positively on the technology team's work. Mrs. Arnold noted the improved cybersecurity score as a significant accomplishment. Mr. Watt asked whether South Carolina might eventually move away from PowerSchool. Mrs. Gray responded that while the State occasionally reviews alternatives, it would be a major undertaking, and for now, PowerSchool remains the system of record.

Superintendents Report

Mrs. Hipp reviewed District test scores. She reported that Anderson 3 students performed above state averages in nearly every tested area, with particularly strong results in ELA for grades 3–6, all ranked in the top eight statewide.

In Math, the District ranked 3rd in the state for 3rd grade, 5th in 4th grade, 6th in 6th grade, and 8th in 7th grade. Fifth and 8th grade Math scores were identified as areas for targeted improvement.

End-of-Course exam results were also strong: English II ranked 2nd in the state, Biology I ranked 4th, Algebra I ranked 14th, while U.S. History remains an area of focus.

She credited LETRS training for teachers as a major factor in ELA gains, particularly the double-digit increases in 3rd-grade ELA and Math. She also noted that the District's overall ranking on SchoolDigger was 6th in South Carolina, placing it in the top 8% of districts statewide, with Star Elementary achieving its highest-ever ranking at 50th.

Board members praised the improvements. Mrs. Arnold commented that the trend shows strong progress and reflects the hard work of teachers and administrators.

Action Items

2026–2027 Anderson County Calendar - Mr. Holbrook moved, Mrs. Arnold seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the 2026–2027 Anderson County Calendar as recommended by the Calendar Committee.

Building Fund Transfer - Mr. Moore presented a request to transfer $816,709.87 from the General Fund to the Building Fund for FY 2024–2025. He explained that the District ended the year with a $1.33 million increase in Fund Balance. Of this, $520,725 will remain in the General Fund to meet the 25% reserve goal, and the remaining $816,709.87 will be transferred to the Building Fund.

Mrs. Arnold asked whether the transferred funds could ever be moved back out of the Building Fund. Mr. Moore replied that they could only be used with Board approval. Mr. Holbrook asked if the $5 million state grant was in the building fund. Mr. Moore clarified that the $5 million state grant for capital projects is separate, with $1.25 million disbursed up front and the remainder provided through quarterly reimbursements.

Mr. Holbrook moved, Mrs. Arnold seconded, and the motion carried unanimously to approve the transfer.

Policy BEA – Livestreaming of Board Meetings - Mrs. Hipp presented Policy BEA, a new policy required by law, stating that meetings must be livestreamed and available on YouTube, with recordings posted within seven days if livestreaming fails. The Board must also advertise within two days that the recording is available.

Mr. Holbrook moved, Mrs. Arnold seconded, and the motion passed 5-0 to approve the first reading of Policy BEA.

Policy GCB – Professional Staff Contracts and Compensation - Mrs. Hipp presented revisions to Policy GCB to reflect the Educator Assistance Act, including specific May 1 deadlines for issuing contracts and providing salary schedule factors. Obsolete references to the TERI program were removed.

Mr. Holbrook moved, Mrs. Arnold seconded, and the motion carried unanimously to approve the first reading of Policy GCB.

Policy GBC – Staff Compensation - Mrs. Hipp presented revisions to Policy GBC to include specific dates for providing salary schedules and returning contracts by May 11.

Mrs. Arnold moved, Mr. Holbrook seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the first reading of Policy GBC.

Mr. Holbrook moved, Mrs. Arnold seconded, and the motion carried unanimously to enter Executive Session for the discussion of personnel and contractual matters.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon returning to open session, no further actions were taken

ADJOURN

Mr. Holbrook moved, Mrs. Arnold seconded, and the motion passed 3 - 0 to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.

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Chairman Secretary