

Palmetto Unified School District
South Carolina Department of Corrections
Board of Trustees Meeting
Thursday, April 6, 2023

Mission Statement: Palmetto Unified School District and South Carolina Department of Corrections will provide students with relevant academic courses, highly effective career related vocational programs and necessary life skills to make a positive impact in society.

Vision: Palmetto Unified School District educates and empowers participants to become employable, self-sufficient citizens.

Objective: To prepare education staff members for the efficient and effective operation of SCDC schools.

Board of Trustees Members Present

Mr. Michael Sumter, Chairman

Rev. Dr. Robert Reid

Dr. Mary Elaine Richardson

Mr. Tyson Grinstead (present virtually via Teams)

Dr. James Ann Sheley (present virtually via Teams)

District Office and Headquarters Staff Members Present

Dr. Cynthia Cash-Greene, Superintendent

Dr. Beverly Holiday

Mr. John Shipman

Dr. Charlette Taylor

Ms. Bazella Glover

Mr. Josh Brade

Dr. Jay Collins

Ms. Georganna Martin

Ms. Vanessa Singleton

Ms. Gina Williams

Ms. Lila Grooms

Dr. Emanuel Alston (via Teams)

Dr. Matthew Thompson (via Teams)

Ms. Tamikah McDuffie (via Teams)

Chaplain Sherman McBeth

Meeting began at 10:00 am

Chairman Sumter – confirmed a quorum and meeting was called to order.

Pledge of Allegiance – led by **Chairman Sumter**

Invocation – **Chaplain Sherman McBeth** of Wateree Correctional Institution

Old Business – Minutes reviewed from January 5, 2023. **Rev. Reid** accepted minutes and all board members were in favor with motion passed.

New Business – Budget Update presented by **Georganna Martin** with her focus being the deficit in the EFA funding. She assured the board that upper management is aware of this deficit and there are plans in

place to first fix this year's deficit and then get to the root of the problem to keep it from happening again in the future. In the short term, the agency will move funds around to cover the deficit. **Ms. Martin** also stated that in long term salary funding will be changed so that staff members who are currently without EFA funding will be new to state funding.

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Cash-Greene discussed Teacher Appreciation which is scheduled for the month of May and we will be planning a celebration with the staff. This event normally takes place on Tuesday of the first week of May. **Dr. Cash-Greene** also discussed the staff conducting student advisory council meetings at each of our institutions and find these meetings to be very informative as we sit with inmates who have been selected by the school to come and share the positive things that are happening relative to the school and any concerns that they may have as well. We take this information and we go back to see how we might be able to address any concerns and also to make things better in terms of delivery of instruction for trusted inmates. These meetings should conclude next month.

Chairman Sumter asked how often do we meet to which **Dr. Cash-Greene** responded twice a year. She continues that the individuals in the office sign up/volunteer to go to institutions. The institutions that have already conducted SAC meetings were mentioned. **Chairman Sumter** inquired if the institutions have some of the same concerns to which **Dr. Cash-Greene** responded that typically they do but that each institution has a different culture however some of the concerns are scheduling, getting to school and a big concern of staffing. **Dr. Cash-Greene** asked for support in speaking with individuals and asking the question as to why every division entity in SCDC is spoken about except education.

2023-2024 Calendar – Dr. Cash-Greene stated that **Dr. Taylor** is the person who works closely with the calendar. There is one major change that **Dr. Cash-Greene** asks in June 2024. She is proposing that days at the end of June, which is the end of the current school year, be used to introduce any new concepts so that if a teacher is planning, then he/she can plan better in starting rather than having to back up and restarting. **Chairman Sumter** asked if this plan would be starting this year. **Dr. Cash-Greene** explained that time is normally district learning and convocation. Also, looking at the first week of July, this is a busy time where people take time off for vacation. The board is presented with the date of July 6th or if can be defaulted to July 13th. **Chairman Sumter** asked the board if they are willing to push the date out for the next board meeting by one week. All present board members were in agreement with a motion to move and second. All were in favor with none opposed. **Dr. Cash-Greene** asked **Dr. Taylor** if she needs to go through any other dates on the calendar.

Adult Education/Certificate Summary – Update given by Dr. Holiday. Adult Ed doing great with currently 199 GEDs and every day we get a request for additional GED vouchers so the numbers continue to increase. During this time of the year for adult ed we are now in the clean up phase as far as trying to get the current students that are enrolled in post TABE testing or get them completed with their GED assessment for the year. **Dr. Cash-Greene** added that we are on point and will probably exceed our goal this year for high school diploma. She also pointed out the increase in numbers and staff/student familiarity with APEX learning. **Rev. Reid** posed the question as to why we can't get other technical colleges on board. **Dr. Cash-Greene** informed him that will be discussed during post-secondary portion of meeting. **Chairman Sumter** inquired where we are with Workkeys. **Dr. Holiday** responded that WIN is back however when they purchased the WIN software, they (the State) did not purchase the courseware so we are in the process of waiting for the courseware to come aboard to assist those students who will be taking the WIN test. **Chairman Sumter** asked if we are in WIN instead of Workkeys; **Dr. Holiday** clarified that we were in Workkeys initially then went to WIN and now back with WIN because the State selected WIN.

Technology Update – None per Josh Brade.

Human Resources – Ms. Grooms stated that currently PUSD has 105 filled positions, we have 49 vacancies. The 49 vacancies are what we call “pink slip” positions and those positions are when employees are paid by the hour so they are hard to fill positions and also based on the location and of these 49 positions that we have vacant 31 of those positions are “pink slip” which is about 60% of the vacancies needing to be filled. The other positions are those of teaching positions where they are not paid by the teacher’s pay scale. She stated there are a few retirees: Mr. Thomas Brown, Ms. Gwnette Taylor who will retire at the end of the school year, Mr. Anthony Bettencourt who will retire on May 1st. **Dr. Cash-Greene** asked **Ms. Grooms** to identify where these employees are located. Mr. Bettencourt is at Wateree and Ms. Taylor is one of the lead teachers at Lee. We have 5 new employees: Laural Mullinax who is an Ed Coordinator at MacDougall, we have Barbara Hill who has returned back to Evans, we have Dr. Casey O-Donnell-Chavis who is a certified teacher at Turbeville, we have Mr. Robert McWhorter who is a carpenter at Lieber and we also have Ms. Nathalie Schlotterhausen-Jones who is an admin at Leath. **Rev. Reid** asked if the new employees would fill in the gap for the retirees. **Ms. Grooms** stated that those positions will be posted. **Rev. Reid** stated that he asks totals and numbers because with retirees, that is a lot of experience we are losing and we want to stay on track. **Dr. Cash-Greene** stated that there are several people who they have in mind to place in those retiree openings. **Mr. Shipman** commented there is a gentleman at Wateree that turned down the Lee welding position and wants to work at Wateree but he’s already at Wateree so that position will need to be filled. Mr. Sprouse who is at MacDougall didn’t retire but went back to horticulture because it paid \$6,000 more. Ms. Grooms added that she is receiving feedback from job fairs.

Post-Secondary – Dr. Cash-Greene addressed a document in the packets for the board members that include numbers of those participants at these particular colleges and universities but just to add we have 4 active colleges listed here serving 183, we have 7 scheduled to begin in the Fall of 2023 which include Benedict College which will be assigned to Broad River and Kershaw, we have Denmark Technical College, Morris College serving Turbeville and Lee, Southern Wesleyan University who will service Tyger River, Livesay and Perry, Voorhees University scheduled to serve MacDougall, Lieber and Allendale, Northeastern Technical College is one of the four on your list. Midlands Technical College who are assigned to Manning and Goodman. Other colleges we have spoken to include USC Aiken, Clinton College in Rock Hill, Piedmont Technical College, Trident Technical College and CIU is one of the four that has already been active and BarberTech Academy who are scheduled for Broad River. **Dr. Richardson** spoke with regard groups that she has been working with to assist in higher education learning for incarcerated individuals. One of the groups, America’s College Prison Education Interest Group, met in November where Mr. Otis Pickett spoke. The other group is National College Learning Center Association. They have been in discussion with Clemson online services to discuss creating modules for use in a prison setting. She gave examples of different modules that can be used to instruct student inmates. She also mentioned conducting a survey of current faculty teaching in the system that asked questions about the needs of the students. **Chairman Sumter** commended **Dr. Richardson** for her efforts with Clemson.

Chairman’s Report – Chairman Sumter reminded all board members if they have not filed with the Ethics Commission, even though it is late, please do so or their will be fines to pay. **Chairman Sumter** also mentioned that it would be good to put a letter together from the Board for Teacher’s Appreciation thanking and appreciating all the work our teachers do. Board members agreed and **Ms. Williams** was asked for assistance in putting that letter together. Also, **Chairman Sumter** stated in the coming days and weeks he’d like to put together a committee to get election officers set for October. **Chairman**

Sumter thanked everyone again and asked for any other comments. **Rev. Reid** made comments about the Annual Conference in Hilton Head in February and thanked everyone on the good job they are doing. **Chairman Sumter** asked if **Mr. Grinstead** and **Dr. Sheley** had any comments, to which **Mr. Grinstead** thanked staff and **Dr. Sheley** thanked everyone including staff and **Dr. Cash-Greene** and wished everyone a happy spring break as well as happy Easter. **Dr. Richardson** inquired about grant writing and **Dr. Cash-Greene** answered her question about grants with assistance from **Ms. Martin** and **Mr. Brade**. **Chairman Sumter** announced the next board meeting scheduled for July 13th and moved to adjourn meeting with all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am
Respectfully,

Next meeting July 13, 2023

Gina Williams, Meeting Secretary
Palmetto Unified School District Board of Trustees

Approved by: _____



Superintendent