

Palmetto Unified School District
South Carolina Department of Corrections
Board of Trustees Meeting
Thursday, October 6, 2022

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 Trustee Members Present

Mr. Michael Sumter, Chairman

Dr. James Quinn, Vice Chairman

Rev. Ronald Bessant

Rev. Dr. Robert Reid

Dr. Elaine Richardson (present virtually via Teams)

Dr. James Ann Sheley (present virtually via Teams)

Wayne Keith Coones (present virtually via Teams)

District Office and Headquarters Staff Members Present

Dr. Cynthia Cash-Greene, Superintendent

Dr. Beverly Holiday

Dr. Charlette Taylor

Dr. Jay Collins

Bazella Glover

John Shipman

Vanessa Singleton

Josh Brade

Lila Grooms

Gina Williams

Ariel Williams

Chaplain Lester Drayton, Jr.

Georganna Martin

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 Lester Drayton, Jr**

Old Business – Minutes reviewed from July 7th meeting. **Mr. Bessant** accepted minutes with **Dr. Quinn** second. All in favor with motion passed.

New Business – Budget Update presented by **Georganna Martin** with news that we managed to get an extra \$100,000 from the agency for operating costs. **Dr. Quinn** inquired if the \$100,000 would continue to be in the budget for the coming years to which **Ms. Martin** responded she did not know but we would know the beginning of next year. **Chairman Sumter** inquired if there is an upcoming deadline on which funds. **Ms. Martin** responded the deadline on the last two COVID funds is actually one year out for one of them on 9/30/23 and two years out of the other one so we have plenty of time to get those funds spent as the department approves. **Chairman Sumter** asked if there was anymore discussion on the budget. **Rev. Reid** responded that things look better since the last meeting. **Chairman Sumter** took time to acknowledge the board members who were meeting virtually, **Dr. Richardson, Dr. Sheley** and **Mr. Coones**.

Superintendent's Report – **Dr. Cash-Greene** referred to information in board members packet, brining attention to the December Legislative Advocacy Conference in Charleston stating that **Ms. G. Williams** would be able to assist board members with that. Also, of interest is the State Department of Education Accreditation Classification Report for 21-22 included in board member's packet. **Dr. Cash-Greene** states we are happy to say that PUSD is all clear. **Dr. Cash-Greene** also informed board members that the accreditation for PUSD references our teacher's certification, having those persons in the right place and the number of hours that they worked not necessarily advanced Ed Cognia accreditation process. **Dr. Cash-Greene** also gave an update on the Post-Secondary Report partnerships: Evans who partners with Northeastern Technical College with 29 participants. She pointed out that our participation is actually growing. Camille Graham partners with Claflin with a total of 42 participants. And at Kirkland Correctional Institution who partners with Columbia International University there are 18. At Ridgeland who also partners with Claflin there are 34 and at Trenton who also partners with Claflin there are 34. Pending partnerships include Voorhees University, Denmark Technical College and Southern Wesleyan University who will also be coming aboard with us. Their MOUs are being reviewed and we expect them to come aboard spring of 2023. **Dr. Cash-Greene** also acknowledged that SCDC awards bonuses to help with motivation and retention to correctional officers annually but that we were also able through the Cares Funding secure two bonuses that we are able to give to persons who are paid out through grants providing approval by the state.

Adult Education Report – **Dr. Holiday** states adult ed is doing well at this time. Trying to get students back in school and everyone at this time are having classes however slow start due to COVID and other challenges we were faced with. At this time, we have 19 GEDs throughout the district, we have 240 vocational certificates, 396 OJTs (that's on the job training), 57 employability skills at this particular time. We do not know what the new career assessment will be at this time but as soon as a decision is made (this probably won't be started until next year) then we will have some Workkeys or WIN or whatever the new career assessment will be. Also as a praise of good news for PUSD, on October 28th the

Adult Ed office will have their Fall institute and will be honoring a student at MacDougall Correctional Institution who will be recognized as having the highest GED in the state (735). It isn't publicized yet but once announced by the State Department we can share this news publicly. **Dr. Holiday** thanked everyone for their support. **Chairman Sumter** inquired if we will be able to announce the student's name with the highest GED once publicized to which **Dr. Holiday** responded yes as well as the newspaper and hopefully the agency will allow us to highlight that student in some way. **Dr. Cash-Greene** added that any inmate working in PI that they have one year to obtain their GED so we are challenged by that because we now have an influx of individuals who were not interested in school now having to enroll in school. **Dr. Quinn** inquired as to where the one year time frame originated. **Dr. Cash-Greene** responded that these are changes that originated outside of PUSD and we support SCDC and whatever we can do to support them in obtaining the goals that they have set for themselves, then that is our job/responsibility.

Human Resources Update – Ms. Grooms informed the board that currently PUSD has 103 employees. We have 11 positions currently posted on the website with 5 pending employees who we have selected to fill vacancies with PUSD so if they opt to accept the positions that will lower our numbers as far as vacancies go. We have new employees recently, Mr. Donta Brown the new admin at MacDougall, Andrew Jankowski the new culinary arts at Trenton and Ariel Williams who is our post-secondary coordinator for the district.

SPEC Update – Dr. Collins states nothing really remarkable about Special Education this quarter. We are maintaining 6 units. We are fully certified with Special Education teachers. Current enrollment is 26 students. He congratulated Turbeville Correctional Institution who on September 19th had a GED recipient granted and as usual we are in full compliance with the State Department of Education and maintain regular contact with them. He reiterates that we maintain the same standards of operation as any other school district in the state.

Chairman Report – Chairman Sumter stated he recently met with Mr. Gadsden and Bryan Stirling and discussed budget, staffing and they seemed to listen, and we hope to get some results from that meeting. **Chairman Sumter** stated congratulations on the 2021/22 accreditations and stated to be awarded that is quite an honor for a school and that is attributed to the work that we do. He expressed appreciation to staff for all the work they are doing. He acknowledged the numbers in GEDs, OJTs and such especially in light of coming out of the pandemic and that we took a hit on everything education wise and to be able to rebound quickly from that is a wonderful thing and is attributed to the work being done. **Chairman Sumter** gave the floor to **Dr. Sheley** for comments who had none, **Dr. Richardson**, who commented on Clemson post-secondary education program including a seminar on prison literacy which speaks about the role of literacy before, during and after incarceration as well as Clemson adding a new faculty member/university historian, Dr. Otis Pickett from Mississippi College who will give a seminar. She also added that they'd still like to schedule a training session for Southern Wesleyan staff and faculty, Clemson and several others in the upstate with Deputy Director Gadsden stating they have reached out to him once and will follow up with that. **Dr. Richardson** stated she is currently in Virginia attending the National College Learning Association and working with a panel of people in her field from Wisconsin, Texas, Georgia, Virginia and South Carolina who are all interested in finding ways to support higher education programs in prison. **Chairman Sumter** thanked her for her work and gave **Mr. Coones** and opportunity to comment. **Mr. Coones** thanked the excellent work by staff, **Dr. Cash-Greene**, and everyone in the

district on the re-accreditation. **Rev. Bessant** thanked the superintendent for keeping everyone motivated and excited about their jobs. He expressed his excitement with the young man with the high GED score and stated this will be news to share at the Hilton Head conference in February as well as his content with bonuses going out because staff do need motivation. **Rev. Reid** “piggy-backed” off the words of **Rev. Bessant** thanking the superintendent and staff for all their hard work. **Dr. Quinn** commented on the hard work that goes into accreditation and he thanked everyone for all their hard work and offered his assistance in anything needed. **Rev. Reid** stated we can give whatever we need help with to them (board members) and they can get it out there. **Rev. Bessant** added that every department that has something to do with children should have some kind of accolades for their county workers. **Chairman Sumter** added that he hopes the website is updated with the things that are going on.

Chairman Sumter asked if there were any other comments or need to go into an executive session. **Rev. Reid** added a happy holiday season to everyone. **Chairman Sumter** stated next meeting slated for January 5, 2023 at which point hopefully we can all be present. **Chairman** moved to adjourn, all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.

Next meeting January 5, 2023

Respectfully,

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

Approved by: _____


Superintendent