



Palmetto Excel Center
Full Board of Directors Meeting

July 28, 2026

ROLL CALL

Board Members present: Cathy Almquist, Herbert Drayton III, Chris Harvey, Amy Mims, Dr. Fran Welch

Staff & Consultants present: Dr. Jeremy Easley, Megan Friedman, Mary Ann Gilmer, Stacey Lindbergh

Call to Order & Attendance (Amy Mims)

Meeting called to order at 4:00 PM. Quorum confirmed. Absent: Kelly Whitaker. Brian Itzkowitz. All other members present. Purpose of this meeting is to review the CCSD contract, appoint a new director, and approve financials.

Agenda Approval (Amy Mims; Motion: Herbert Drayton; Second: Chris Harvey)

Agenda and Meeting Minutes approved unanimously.

Introduction of Cathy Almquist

CCSD Contract Negotiations

- Negotiations are in the second draft review.
- Performance Metrics: Aligned with the SC School Report Card.
- Action: New metrics sent to Buffy Roberts (CCSD Office of Accountability) for review.
- Corrective Action Process: Awaiting CCSD's process documentation to ensure alignment.

Timeline: Return final revisions by July 29. + Target Vote: Aug 10

School Start & Director Appointment

- **School Start Delayed:** The start is pushed two weeks, from Aug 12 to Aug 26.
 - **Rationale:** Securing the CCSD contract is a prerequisite for PowerSchool access and state funding.
 - **Student Impact:** Minimal attrition expected, primarily among new students.
 - **Credit Hours:** The academic schedule can accommodate the delay, even a start after Labor Day.
- **New Director Appointed:** The board unanimously appointed Troy Barnes as Director. **Process:** 20+ applicants → 5 interviewed → Troy Barnes top-scoring.

Financials & Palmetto Goodwill Update



- **June Financials:** Approved. **Operating Account:** ~\$240k balance as of July 15.
- **Bridge Funding Plan:** Palmetto Goodwill will provide bridge funding until state payments begin. Invoices from Palmetto Goodwill will be deferred; funds will be dispersed from the \$850k commitment as needed.
- **Palmetto Goodwill Initiatives:**
 - **Good Biz AI:** An app to guide small businesses through planning, funding, and marketing.
 - **CVS Pharmacy Tech Training:** A new program offering a direct employment pipeline for Excel students.

Governance & Board Development

- **Board Recruitment:** Herbert Drayton will lead a board recruitment effort once the CCSD contract is finalized.

Next Steps

- **Mary Ann:** Call Anita Huggins to resolve the CCSD clause. Return final contract revisions to CCSD by July 29.
- **Chris:** Draft the offer letter for Troy Barnes.
- **Amy:** Add John Brassini (legislative advocate) to the next agenda to discuss long-term funding strategy.
- **Herbert:** Lead board recruitment efforts after the CCSD contract is finalized.

Adjournment (Amy Mims)

Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:45 PM.