

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

A Brief Recap of the Board Meeting and News from Savannah Chatham County Public Schools



M. Ann Levett, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Savannah-Chatham Co.
Public School System
208 Bull Street
Savannah, GA 31401
(912) 395-5600

SCHOOL BOARD

Dr. Joe Buck
President

Julie M. Wade
District 1

Dr. Dionne Hoskins-Brown
Vice President
District 2

Cornelia H. Hall
District 3

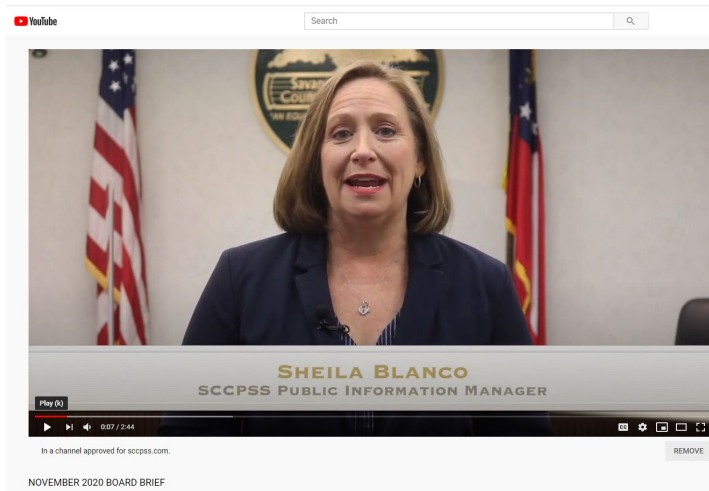
Shawn A. Kachmar
District 4

Irene Hines
Vice President Pro-Tempore
District 5

Dr. David Bringman
District 6

Michael Johnson
District 7

Dr. Tonia Howard-Hall
District 8



Video highlights from the November 4 Board Meeting from Public Information Manager Sheila Blanco. Click [here](#) to watch.

SCCPSS Board Approves Two Measures Regarding Return to Learn Plan

At the Regular Meeting of the Board on Wednesday, November 4, 2020 – a motion was approved stating the hybrid plan's success is directly linked to having enough teachers and staff in buildings to meet the needs of students selecting in-person learning. Therefore, teachers and staff in general, except those who qualify for an exemption under board policy, will be required to return to work at their assigned building/work site when Chatham County's CTI is at or below 100, or as of December 31, 2020, when the CARES ACT expires, whichever occurs first.

<http://go.boarddocs.com/ga/sccs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BV2N2Y5DD3CE>

Thresholds for Virtual Learning: MOTION APPROVED

Also at the Regular Meeting, a motion was passed stating the District's implementation and continuation of in-person learning should be driven by data. If the time comes that Chatham County's spread of COVID increases rapidly, the district must be prepared to take appropriate actions up to and including a districtwide transition back to fully virtual learning. Therefore, if Chatham County's transmission of COVID increases to the point that our area's CTI, Percentage of Positive Tests, and Daily Case Rate per 100,000 are all in the Red transmission level, as reported by the Coastal DPH, a districtwide transition back to virtual learning will be implemented for all students, with teachers delivering virtual instruction from their assigned worksite. Returning to hybrid in-person learning will occur when one of these 3 metrics remains lower than a RED transmission level for at least 14 calendar days.

<http://go.boarddocs.com/ga/sccs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BV2N2Z5DD616>

2020 SCCPSS Graduation Rate Sets New Record, Once Again Surpasses State and National Rates

The Georgia Department of Education has released SY 2019-20 graduation rates for the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System. SCCPSS improved its cohort graduation rate by nearly two percentage points over last year – rising from 87.8% to 89.7%. That number surpasses the state rate for the sixth year in a row.

<https://spwww.sccpss.com/Pages/2020-SCCPSS-Graduation-Rate-Sets-New-Record,-Once-Again-Surpasses-State-and-National-Rates.aspx>

COVID-19 Operational Update

At the Formal meeting of the Board, Superintendent Dr. Ann Levett gave her monthly operational briefing to the Board.

<http://go.boarddocs.com/ga/scs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BU5UR27485A1>

Business System Replacement Update

The Technology, Finance and Human Resources Departments provided the Board with an update on the district's Business System Replacement. Phase I is scheduled to Go Live on December 1st, with Phase 2 HR Start going live on April 1, 2021. For more on the project:

<http://go.boarddocs.com/ga/scs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BU5UUQ748617>

Fleet Management Software Contract Approved for Transportation

The Board approved a contract with Synovia Solutions to install equipment and provide software that will enable the Transportation Department to verify routes and track student ridership in real time and by historical data. Time and attendance of bus drivers and monitors will be managed by mobile data terminals that will provide a vehicle inspection system and two-way messaging with managers. Parents will be able to view real-time bus locations and movements online by using the "Here Comes the Bus" application. This software will integrate with our current routing software (Transfinder) and will replace our current GPS software (Zonar). Total cost to be billed to the District is \$500,484.00 over a period of two (2) years.

<http://go.boarddocs.com/ga/scs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BU5UV4748623>

Postsecondary Accelerated Options

The Informal Meeting of the Board also featured a report of Postsecondary Accelerated Options including Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment and International Baccalaureate participation and outcomes data from the 2019-20 School Year. Highlights include: 1,952 students successfully completed one or more AP, IB, or dual enrollment courses. The district's PAO completion rate was 21%, with school rates ranging from 4% to 60%. To see the full report:

<http://go.boarddocs.com/ga/scs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BUTM6E59B45F>

Charter School Financial Reports

At the Informal Meeting of the Board, representatives from each of the district's Charter Schools provided financial reports to the Board. The reports can be found by clicking on the links below.

<http://go.boarddocs.com/ga/scs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BUMSH66DAFDC>

Professional Senate Report

A report from the latest meeting of the Superintendent's Professional Senate was presented by our Teacher of the Year and Instructional Support Person of the Year.

<http://go.boarddocs.com/ga/scs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BU5UR97485A8>

Planning for ESPLOST IV

At the informal meeting of the Board, a discussion regarding ESPLOST IV was held to obtain Board feedback on priorities and budget planning sheets.

<http://go.boarddocs.com/ga/scs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BUTM66599AF8>

American Education Week

The Board proclaimed the week of November 16-20, 2020, be recognized as the 99th Annual Observance of American Education Week in the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System and all throughout Chatham County.

<http://go.boarddocs.com/ga/sccs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BU5URK7485B2>

Retired Educators Day

The Board proclaimed November 1st, 2020, as declared by the Governor of the State of Georgia, be recognized as Retired Educators Day in the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System and that every citizen join us throughout the entire month of November to recognize the lasting contributions of retired educators

<http://go.boarddocs.com/ga/sccs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BU5URN7485B5>

ESPLOST UPDATE

Savannah High School Stadium Video Scoreboard Purchase

The Board approved, under the terms set forth in RFP C20-05, the award of a contract to Formetco, Inc. in the amount of \$228,212.00 for the Savannah High School Video Scoreboard.

<http://go.boarddocs.com/ga/sccs/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BU5UU5748604>

MEDIA ROUND-UP

Here are some of the GOOD NEWS STORIES about our schools that you may have missed!

SCCPSS board approves Return to Learn Plan measures

WTOC, November 4

"I cannot in good conscience tell families that if they want to send their kids to school right now, that we cannot provide the school for them because we don't have the teachers to teach them," said School Board President Dr. Joseph Buck.

<https://www.wtoc.com/2020/11/04/sccpss-board-approves-return-learn-plan-measures/>

SCCPSS board approves new measures for Return to Learn plan

WSAV, November 6

The Savannah-Chatham County School System is working to bring teachers back to the classroom, but some parents say schools should shut down completely as the district manages recent COVID-19 outbreaks.

<https://www.wsav.com/news/local-news/sccpss-board-approves-new-measures-for-return-to-learn-plan/>

Pandemic blues inspire Savannah 10-year-old to co-author book with her grandmother

Savannah Morning News, October 29

Fourth grader Delaney Myers is now a published author. Delaney's birthday party last weekend doubled as a book signing event. Celebrities like Savannah Mayor Van Johnson and vocalist Roger Moss (a founder of Savannah Children's Choir and Savannah Classical Academy) surprised her with guest appearances to celebrate the book launch.

<https://www.savannahnow.com/entertainmentlife/20201029/pandemic-blues-inspire-savannah-10-year-old-to-co-author-book-with-her-grandmother>

Reimagining school: Students learn anywhere and everywhere

Savannah Morning News, October 29

If it seems like 2020 has done nothing except going from bad to worse, some good can still come out of it. Education is one such commodity that will be reborn and changed forever in the post-COVID world.

<https://www.savannahnow.com/news/20201029/reimagining-school-students-learn-anywhere-and-everywhere>

Top Teacher: Melissa Watkins

WTOC, October 28

Melissa Watkins is happy to be back in the classroom with her kids.

“I think I’m the most excited, I said me, I’m the first one, I’m coming back.”

<https://www.wtoc.com/2020/10/28/top-teacher-melissa-watkins/>

Local businesses donate over 50,000 water bottles to students returning to in-person learning

WSAV, October 28

Local businesses came together to donate over 50,000 reusable water bottles to students returning to school in Effingham and Chatham Counties as CDC guidelines encourage staff and students to bring their own water to minimize the touching of water fountains.

<https://www.wsav.com/community/local-businesses-donate-over-50000-water-bottles-to-students-returning-to-in-person-learning/>

SCCPSS District Stadium In Operation

SCCPSS, October 27

The Savannah Chatham County Public Schools Stadium at Islands High School has hosted a few weeks of football contests now. While full capacity is not recommended at this time, due to the pandemic, the stadium will hold 2,000 spectators and boasts a state-of-the-art digital scoreboard, as well as exciting lighting capabilities and equipped lockers for Home and Away teams. The stadium was built as a multi-sport venue, and the field will accommodate soccer and lacrosse, in addition to football.

<https://spwww.sccpss.com/Pages/SCCPSS-District-Stadium-In-Operation.aspx>

SCCPSS enters Phase III of reopening plan: hybrid learning continues

WJCL, October 27

Monday, Oct. 26, officially marked Phase Three of the reopening plan, meaning that all students can go back to the classroom, if they choose to.

<https://www.wjcl.com/article/sccpss-enters-phase-iii-of-reopening-plan-hybrid-learning-continues/34490604>

Savannah Tech names annual Community STARS

Savannah Morning News, October 28

Savannah Technical College (STC) Foundation celebrated 21 community stars virtually last week for its Tribute to Community STARS event. Dr. Ann Levett, Superintendent of Savannah Chatham County Public Schools and Gif Lockley, principal at Savannah Arts Academy, were among the honorees.

<https://www.savannahnow.com/business/20201027/savannah-tech-names-annual-community-stars>

With health protocols and technology installed, more Savannah-Chatham students return to in-person learning

Savannah Morning News, October 27

Monday was another “first day of school” for Savannah-Chatham County public school students.

Phase III of Return to Learn welcomed back students in grades 3-5, 7 and 10-12 in schools where parents opted to send their children to the classroom and where schools had teachers in the rooms to accommodate them.

<https://www.savannahnow.com/news/20201026/with-health-protocols-and-technology-installed-more-savannah-chatham-students-return-to-in-person-learning>

Savannah-Chatham students take part in Red Ribbon Week with help from mayor

Savannah Morning News, October 26

“What do you do when someone says, ‘Want some drugs?’” Mayor Van Johnson asked the students. “No!” they all replied. Individual schools will hold celebrations throughout the week. Students and staff at White Bluff Elementary wore hats for “Hat Day” on Monday. Parents should check their child’s school website for each day’s theme.

<https://www.savannahnow.com/news/20201026/savannah-chatham-students-take-part-in-red-ribbon-week-with-help-from-mayor>

Savannah-Chatham ‘twilight school’ a win-win for staff and children

Savannah Morning News, October 23

“We have 63 students in Twilight School and 51 students in the tutorial program,” said Vallerie Cave, district associate superintendent of school transformation and innovation.

Twilight School is held from 4:30-7:30 p.m. and students receive instruction in all their required core subjects from certified teachers.

<https://www.savannahnow.com/news/20201023/savannah-chatham-rsquotwilight-schoolrsquo-win-win-for-staff-and-children>

SCCPSS prepare for COVID friendly school bus changes

WTGS, October 23

Savannah Chatham Public School System (SCCPSS) school leaders are gearing up for Monday, which is Phase 3 of their re-opening plan.

<https://fox28media.com/news/coronavirus/sccpss-prepare-for-covid-friendly-school-bus-changes>

Two Savannah-Chatham teachers detail six things to know about ‘return to learn’ experience

Savannah Morning News, October 23

Two Hesse K-8 teachers who returned to the classroom in Phase II on Oct. 5 – Sixth-grade teacher Suzanne Fleming and first-grade teacher Elizabeth Thompson – agreed to share some insights on the new “normal” of school.

<https://www.savannahnow.com/news/20201023/two-savannah-chatham-teachers-detail-six-things-to-know-about-lsquotreturn-to-learnrsquo-experience>

H.V. Jenkins Student Named to State Superintendent's Student Advisory Council
SCCPSS.com, October 15

State School Superintendent Richard Woods has selected 64 Georgia students to serve on his 2020-21 Student Advisory Council. Throughout the school year, these middle and high school students will meet with Superintendent Woods to discuss the impact of state policies in the classroom. Dawson James, a freshman at Jenkins High School, was selected for the honor.

<https://spwww.sccpss.com/Pages/H.V.-Jenkins-Student-Named-to-State-Superintendent%E2%80%99s-Student-Advisory-Council.aspx>

Charles Ellis Montessori Academy holds Parade of Arts and Fun

WTOC, October 22

"We wanted to give our whole Ellis family something familiar but still safe and this came out. We know they will have a good time. They can dress up, play and see each other and we're all going to stay safe," said Melanie Finnegan with the Charles Ellis Montessori Academy PTA.

<https://www.wtoc.com/2020/10/22/charles-ellis-montessori-academy-holds-parade-arts-fun/>

Savannah-Chatham special education teacher, students bond online for successful learning

Savannah Morning News, October 21

For the students in Sarah McCallar's class at Coastal Georgia Comprehensive Academy, learning virtually at home is the same as being in school.

<https://www.savannahnow.com/news/20201021/savannah-chatham-special-education-teacher-students-bond-online-for-successful-learning>

SCCPSS Campus Police Awarded Grant Under Opioid Affected Youth Initiative

SCCPSS.com, October 20

The Board of Education Police Department has been awarded a grant from the Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council for a project under the Opioid Affected Youth Initiative. B.O.E.P.D. Campus Police had one of eleven projects to be awarded part of \$500,000 slated for the initiative.

<https://spwww.sccpss.com/Pages/SCCPSS-Campus-Police-Awarded-Grant-Under-Opioid-Affected-Youth-Initiative.aspx>

DATES TO REMEMBER

November 13, 2020

Special Called Meeting

9:00 a.m.

Whitney Board Room, 2 Laura Avenue

December 9, 2020

Informal Session 11:00 a.m.

Regular Board Meeting 2:00 p.m.

Whitney Board Room, 2 Laura Avenue

Space will be limited due to social distance requirements. A livestream will be provided for public access.