

April 19, 2016

Electronically and by First Class Mail

Cathy Hazelwood, Esq.  
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Columbia, SC 29201

Office of General Counsel

Dr. Gerrita Postlewait  
Superintendent of Schools

John F. Emerson  
General Counsel

RE: Agenda item for the South Carolina State Department of  
Education Board of Trustees meeting, May 11

Dear Ms. Hazelwood:

Pursuant to the Schools of Choice law (S.C. Code Ann. §59-19-350), in 2014 the Charleston County School District collaborated with Meeting Street Schools (MSS) to open Meeting Street Elementary School at Brentwood, which is now nearing the conclusion of its second very successful year.

As part of that process, CCSD and MSS received County Board approval; and subsequently State Board approval for exemptions from State Law; namely:

- S.C. Code Ann. §59-25-410 *et seq.* (the Teacher Employment and Dismissal Act), and
- S.C. Code Ann. §59-26-40(H) which provides appeal rights to Annual contract teachers.

CCSD is now expanding its partnership with MSS to include students who are zoned for Burns Elementary school, located in a contiguous attendance area. As part of our District's capital projects plan, the existing Burns facility is scheduled to be rebuilt starting this summer – this process will take approximately 2 years.

The expansion of our relationship with MSS is structured as such:

- Beginning in the fall of 2016, K5 students zoned for Burns will attend Meeting Street at Brentwood.
- Students in grades 1-5 at Burns will continue to be taught by Burns faculty, and will reside in the pre-determined swing-space for the construction.

- With each year subsequent to 2016-2017, MSS will add an additional grade of Burns students to their program until the school reaches fifth grade.
- At the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year, the newly completed Burns will re-open, and Meeting Street will operate that campus just as it does at the Brentwood campus.

For these reasons, and in an abundance of caution, CCSD and MSS are asking the S.C. State Board of Education to approve, pursuant to 59-19-350, the exemptions adopted by two thirds vote of the CCSD Board of Trustees.

The first two exemptions are the same exemptions that were granted in 2014 to Brentwood, and are now meant to include the Burns students.

The second two exemptions are additive to the current operational structure at Brentwood, and are meant to allow the educational model at Brentwood and Burns to be fully realized per our Operational Plan for the schools.

At its regularly scheduled meeting held April 11, 2016, the Charleston County School District Board of Trustees, Strategic Education Committee approved, by a two-thirds vote, a motion to exempt the school from certain obligations set forth in the law

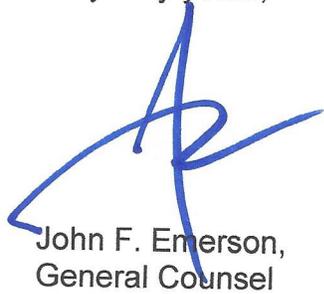
It is anticipated that the full Board of Trustees will adopt a similar, more specific motion at its upcoming meeting on April 25, 2016. It is the belief of the CCSD and MSS that the school will be able to more swiftly respond to performance concerns among the teaching staff, to provide extended learning time, to provide the staffing that allows two teachers in every room, and the flexibility to ensure the most successful professionals in every corner of the school.

We ask that you place on the May 11 State Board of Trustees agenda an action item upholding these exemptions.

Signature page follows

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,



John F. Emerson,  
General Counsel

encl.

c: Dr. Gerrita Postlewait (electronically)  
Mr. Ben Navarro (electronically)