



JOHN
DE LA
HOWE
SCHOOL

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Proposed JDLHS Admissions Policy Aims to Ensure Safety

McCORMICK—The John de la Howe School Board of Trustees last Thursday gave first reading to a new admissions policy designed to ensure safety for those on the John de la Howe campus as well to those living in the surrounding community.

The school's proposed Independent Living Program admissions policy provides admission guidelines for that program, which provides vocational, educational and life skills training for older youth who are at risk. These youth are aging out of the foster care or juvenile justice supervisory programs of the SC Department of Social Services or the SC Department of Juvenile Justice.

The state's General Assembly has identified a critical need to assist such youth, most of whom are not yet fully prepared for adult life. The admissions change is geared toward youth ages 15-18. Participation in the program would be voluntary based on the policy.

Barbara Devinney of McCormick, a member of the board, said individuals with a history of certain types of behavior or offenses would not be considered out of regard for the safety of other students on the John de la Howe School campus, as well as for all other McCormick County residents.

These would include felony charges, violent offenses as defined in SC Code Sec. 16-1-60, extensive gang involvement, pyromania, sexual predatory behaviors, history of extreme violence, physical altercations with school staff, pregnancy, extreme psychosis, extreme substance abuse and inability to pass a physical examination by a medical doctor.

In other business, the board also voted to give the school's president, Dr. Danny Webb, authority to move forward with the procurement process to address much needed facility upgrades on campus. Among these needs are repairing leaks in the campus water tower, which provides fire safety, and a new roof on the school's administrative building, constructed in 1938.

The board also approved moving forward with a strategic plan to expand the agricultural program at John de la Howe.

Thursday's meeting was the last scheduled meeting of the panel in 2016. The board is scheduled to meet next on Feb. 17, 2017.

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