



Steve Barnette  
Superintendent

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## Deborah Collett Elected Chair of Paulding BOE, Jeff Fuller Vice Chair, for 2024

In unanimous votes at its regular meeting Jan. 9, 2024, the Paulding County Board of Education elected Deborah Collett as chair and Jeff Fuller as vice chair for 2024.

Collett represents District 4 in south Paulding County and was elected to the school board in 2020. She is serving as board chair for the first time. Fuller, the school board's at-large member, was elected to office in 2016.

Mrs. Collett joined the school board during the COVID-19 pandemic and she and Mr. Fuller, who was chairman at the time, helped provide leadership for the school district during that difficult time as Paulding County schools were among the first in the nation to return to in-person instruction. She and Mr. Fuller also were integral parts of the school board's search for a new superintendent that resulted in the appointment of Steve Barnette to the interim position in 2021, and to the full-time role in 2022.

During their time on the Board the school district has implemented a comprehensive five-year Strategic Plan that deals with five key areas of focus including: Growth and Success For All; Communication and Engagement; Attracting, Developing and Retaining Quality, Diverse Professionals; Operational and Organizational Excellence; and Innovative Practices and Resource Implementation. The school district has also taken extensive steps to address growth, capacity, and facility aging issues in schools throughout the county. Multiple renovation and classroom addition projects have been completed or are under way, and a brand-new school, Crossroads Middle School – the first new school to be constructed in Paulding County in more than a decade – will open for the 2024-2025 school year.

Also, during Collett and Fuller's time on the school board the school district recently saw the five-year E-SPLOST one-cent sales tax renewed for the sixth consecutive time with 76-percent approval among those who voted. Additionally, the school board's efforts were recognized by the Georgia School Boards Association which granted the Board of Education its fourth-consecutive Exemplary Board status in 2023.

As board chair, Mrs. Collett will oversee a school board that governs the 11<sup>th</sup> largest school district in Georgia with 33 schools (34 in 2024-2025) and more than 32,000 students. The diverse district employs more than 4,000 staff and has an annual budget of approximately \$390 million.

"We have an outstanding school system here in Paulding County, and I look forward to continuing our record of success," said Mrs. Collett. "We also have an excellent leadership team in place and the information and data they provide us helps the school board make decisions that are in the best interest of the students of Paulding County. That's what this job is about – the students. We have to ensure that our focus is always on providing what's best for our students at all times. I look forward to the challenges and successes ahead, and can't wait to work with our community, our district staff, and my colleagues on the school board to serve the students of our amazing school system."



Deborah Collett



Jeff Fuller

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