

MGSD Board of Education
March 19, 2024, Regular Board Meeting

MOORESVILLE GRADED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, March 19, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

The Board of Education of the Mooresville Graded School District met during a regular monthly session on Tuesday, February 13, 2024, at the Performing Arts Center at Mooresville High School, 659 E. Center Avenue, Mooresville, NC. 28115.

Board Members Present: Mr. Greg Whitfield, Board Chair; Mrs. Kerry Pennell, Vice-Chair; Dr. Debbie Marsh; Rakeem Brawley; Mrs. Monica Bender.

Also Present: Dr. Jason Gardner, Superintendent, and Kevin Donaldson, Board Attorney. Dr. Michael Royal, Chief of Schools; Dr. Scott Smith, Chief Operations Officer; Mrs. Angie Davis, Chief Finance Officer; Mrs. Tanae McLean, Chief Communications Officer and Title IX Coordinator. Mrs. Cindy Teague, Interim Board Clerk, were also present.

Mr. Whitfield, Board Chair, called the meeting to order, and held a moment of silence. Mr. Whitfield shared this is the first day of Spring and a season of renewal. A quote was shared from Lady Bird Johnson and Mark Twain. Mr. Whitfield recognized this month as being Women's History Month.

Approval of the Agenda: On a motion by Debbie Marsh, seconded by Monica Bender, the board voted unanimously to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes: On a motion by Kerry Pennell, seconded by Rakeem Brawley, the board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from February 13, 2024, regular meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Student of the Month: The School Board recognized & presented the Student of the Month Award to Mariana Montenegro-Rodriguez, an 8th grade student and Lauryn Buie, a 6th grade student at Selma Burke. Dr. Gardner shared the reasons the students were selected as listed on the nomination form.

Artist of the Month: The School Board recognized & presented the Artist of the Month to Noah Hutto an 8th grade student at Selma Burke. Dr. Gardner shared the reasons the student was selected as listed on the nomination form.

ABCD Award: The board recognized and presented the monthly Above and Beyond the Call of Duty Award to Ms. Tina Jordan, Behavior Intervention Specialist at Selma Burke Middle School. The SBMS Administration Team nominated Ms. Jordan. Dr. Gardner shared the reasons she was chosen, as written on her nomination form.

Spotlight on People: (a): Johnny Merriman, a senior at Mooresville High School ended his wrestling career as MHS Wrestling State Champion. His season record of 37-1 and a career record of 140-27. Throughout his wrestling career at MHS, he has been a 3-time qualifier, and a two-time regional champion. As a junior he placed 4th out of 182 in the state tournament. This year he was the 215lb. 4A state champion.

Spotlight on People (b): Selma Burke Girls JV Basketball were recognized for being the 2024 Undefeated Conference Champions. A basketball team that defied expectations, shattered records, and left an indelible mark on the school's athletic history. This group of 6th graders embarked on their inaugural season with determination and grit, ultimately achieving the seemingly impossible feat of going 16-0.

ROSTER: *Aubree Paige; Cadence Roberts; Nya Parker; Kalaya McLaughlin; Zoe Hall; Ava Crowley; Kensley Hoover; Grace Robinson; Miyah Smith; Emmalynn Tillinghast; Kalani Sherrill; Head Coach-Shawna Gallmon; Assistant Coach-Lucy Mitchell*

Instructional Highlights: “6th Grade Elective Wheel” – Selma Burke Middle School-Dan Miller, Principal, along with several teachers presented the rationale and purpose behind this program. “The Wheel” was designed to help students experience electives before they settled into an elective for the entire semester. Every 6th grade student visited each elective for a short period. This time helped students learn what they liked; get to know teachers; and learn more about classes. The biggest advantage was the relationship building between teachers and students. Students are better prepared to make their selections and this also helps teachers promote their programs.

Schedule next meeting: The next regular school board meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at East Mooresville Intermediate, at 6:00 p.m.

Staff Reports

- A. **Maximize Opportunity & Achievement (MOA):** Dr. Michael Royal, Chief of Schools presented the updates on Maximize Opportunity & Achievement (MOA).
- Spring sports are in full swing in all secondary schools.
 - March is National Athletic Trainer Appreciation Month. MGSD is very fortunate to have great first responders at our Middle and High Schools along with a certified athletic trainer at MHS-*Tannon Konopka, Lori Denzel, Julie McKeon, Keri White, Heather Burlison, Hannah Pierce*
 - Workkeys assessment was given at MHS last month. Ninety-eight percent of our eligible students were tested. February 28, 2024 the ACT was administered on-line to the whole junior class. This is the first time the ACT was given completely on-line.
 - Second grade students at each elementary school presented their gateway projects before spring break. Fifth grade students will present their projects in late April.
 - Dr. Waid and Mrs. Conley led the second K-12 Instructional Coach meeting of the year focusing on universal walkthrough elements, Key look-fors and providing effective feedback to teachers.
 - We are in the fourth quarter of the academic year. Kindergarten registration is open for the 2024-2025 school year. Course registration at MHS is in process.
 - Dr. Waid and Mrs. Conley took sixteen K-8 staff members to the Southwest Literacy Summit in Concord. The team learned effective literacy strategies to use in the classroom and next steps for using science of reading strategies with LETRS.
 - Mooresville High School is in the process of planning their annual E3 event which celebrates our seniors who are either enrolling, enlisting, or being employed after graduation. This event will take place on May 17, 2024.
- B. **Safe, Happy and Healthy:** Dr. Scott Smith, Chief of Operations presented an update on Safe, Happy and Healthy School.
- We continue to focus on alternative learning options for the 2024-2025 school year. The potential plans will be shared at the work section on April 24, 2024.

- We are reviewing our student code of conduct and discipline practices across our schools and reviewing our matrix of behavior interventions for all students for alignment and consistency.
- Our EC team is preparing for the April 1 child count which provides state funding for the next school year. We serve 800 students with disabilities.
- EC resource and transition fair is March 26, 2024 at MMS from 3:00-6:00 pm. Twenty agencies attending include ECAC, Voc, Rehab, Autism Society, Mitchell Community & Rowan Community Colleges, Partners Behavioral Health, Miracles Counseling Centers, Lake Norman Youth Strong, Rainbow Kids and more.
- Our new Weapons Detection Canine “Max” is on the job with Officer Bumgardner.
- A huge shout out to the Technology Department and all schools for successfully swapping out over 5000 devices in the past several weeks. Teacher ipads are coming in April.

C. Recruit, Grow, and Retain: Mrs. Angie Davis, Chief Finance Officer presented updates on Recruit Grow, and Retain strategies.

- Recruiting season has begun with visits last month to UNC Wilmington, Appalachian State, Winston Salem State, and High Point University. Mrs. Kuhn and Dr. Albert are recruiting in Pittsburgh and West Virginia this week.
- The state teacher working conditions survey is underway. This is an important component to understanding why teachers remain in the profession. We are at 59% completion. The survey closes on March 31, 2024.
- The independent auditors from Anderson, Smith & Wike were in the schools at the end of February conducting the annual school audits. The financial data managers, along with the support of their principals, did an amazing job.

D. Culture of Relationships: Mrs. Tanae McLean, Chief Communications Officer presented updates on Culture of Relationships.

- One of our strategies is to develop a plan for targeted community outreach initiatives to traditionally underserved and underrepresented populations. On April 17 we will hold our first roundtable discussion with key members in our community, staff members, and parents.
- Building meaningful partnerships is also part of our strategic plan. Wednesday, March 20, 2024 we will hold a School Health Advisory Committee meeting. Final touches will be put on our Happy, Healthy Community event. This event will take place on April 17 at Liberty Park from 5:00-7:00 pm.
- Our Finals site contract is due for renewal this summer but a decision has been made to go with a new website provider-Smart Sites. Smart Sites is part of ParentSquare and will allow cohesive communication. We will go live prior to the new school year.
- Our second Parent & Community surveys will be sent out in April.
- Our partnership with the United Way of Iredell County is beneficial to both our district and community. The United Way is in the process of starting the HIVE-Helping Iredell Volunteers Engage. This is an on-line site where agencies throughout the county will have a microsite for volunteer opportunities. MGSD will have access to utilize the HIVE as a portal for volunteer needs.
- Our first Oregon Trail learning event throughout Downtown Mooresville will be held April 4, 2024. There will be different stops throughout mainstreet and Broad street with fun interactive activities.

E. Superintendent Comments:

- We are now in the final quarter of the academic year. Our schools will be hard at work over the next two months as they strive to finish the year strong and ensure every student is prepared for end of year testing. We are proud of all the work our students and staff have put into making this a successful year.
- Our state legislators will be back in session in April. Last year they approved a budget that lacked the type of pay increases that our educators need and deserve. Many experienced educators will receive a pay raise that is under 100 dollars a month before taxes, which does not come close to keeping up with inflation. Mooresville Graded has worked hard to allocate local funds to increase compensation, in alignment with our priority to recruit, grow, and retain talent. The district raised the local supplement to make it one of the most competitive in the region and state and has implemented a new classified employee pay structure which resulted in significant raises for many classified staff members. Local districts do not have the funding to bear this burden alone so I encourage everyone that supports public education to advocate for more aggressive pay raises for school district employees.

F. Board Events: Greg Whitfield, Board Chairman provided information on several events that will take place in the district. He encouraged people to attend these events.

- Boosterthon - MIS, RRES, PVES
- Oregon Trail
- MHS Spring Musical
- MMS Theatre Showcase

Public Comment: No public comment.

Items for Approval:

- A. **2024-2025 Budget:** Mrs. Angie Davis, Chief Finance Officer presented and requested board approval of the proposed budget for the 2024-2025 school year. This proposed budget document includes our Current Expenses Fund and Capital Outlay Fund.

On a motion by Rakeem Brawley, seconded by Debbie Marsh, the board voted unanimously to approve the 2024-2025 budget as presented. Motion carried.

- B. **Budget Amendment:** Mrs. Angie Davis, Chief Finance Officer presented and requested approval of the amendments to be made to the Budget Resolution for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

On a motion by Debbie Marsh, seconded by Monica Bender, the board voted unanimously to approve the Budget Amendments for fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 as presented. Motion carried.

- C. **Adoption of 457 Plan Option:** Mrs. Angie Davis, Chief Finance Officer presented and requested the approval of the 457 Plan Option. The state of NC has two options for supplemental retirement savings; the NC 457 plan and the NC 401 (k) plan which is currently offered in MGSD. The NC 457 plan has both pre-tax and Roth options and can be utilized by all employees regardless of benefit status. By adopting the NC 457 plan, MGSD will strengthen the current suite of benefit offerings for employees.

On a motion by Kerry Pennell, seconded by Rakeem Brawley, the board voted unanimously to approve the adoption of 457 Plan Option as presented. Motion carried.

D. **Bus Security Cameras:** Dr. Scott Smith, Chief Operations Officer presented and requested the approval to purchase bus cameras. This fall, MGSD was awarded funding through the state safety grant. One of the top priorities for equipment in the grant was to replace the bus camera system in all yellow buses. MGSD was also awarded funds through a state stop-arm grant. We are requesting approval to purchase bus cameras and equipment from Safety Vision in the amount of \$116,965.77 plus sales tax. The purchase price has been secured through a cooperative purchasing program agreement. State funds from the safety grant and stop arm grant will be utilized for the purchase.

On a motion by Monica Bender, seconded by Debbie Marsh, the board voted unanimously to approve the purchase of bus cameras and equipment as presented. Motion carried.

E. **Summer Testing Plan:** Mrs. Conley and Ms. Waid presented and requested the approval of the summer testing schedule. The state of North Carolina allows school districts to offer summer testing opportunities for EOG/EOC testing outside of the traditional school calendar with district board approval. This opportunity allows students who were close to proficiency to take the EOG/EOC again after remediation has been provided. While the student score does not count for school growth, it does count for school and district proficiency calculations. The summer testing plan presentation was shared with the board as part of the February BOE meeting.

On a motion by Monica Bender, seconded by Kerry Pennell, the board voted unanimously to approve the summer testing plan as presented. Motion carried.

F. **Board Policies:** Mrs. Tanae McLean, Chief Communications Officer presented and requested board approval of Board Policy 3620 Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations as presented at the February 13, 2024 Board of Education meeting. The following policy needs a technical correction due to the change of our grade span configuration in Mooresville Graded Schools. The revised policy will align with current practice for middle school sports.

On a motion by Debbie Marsh, seconded by Rakeem Brawly, the board voted unanimously to approve the revisions to Board Policy 3620 -Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations as presented. Motion carried.

Greg Whitfield presented and requested board approval to purchase 126 South Magnolia subject to acceptable home inspection and other due diligence to be completed.

On a motion by Debbie Marsh, seconded by Monica Bender the board voted unanimously to approve the purchase of 126 Magnolia subject to acceptable home inspection and other due diligence to be completed. Motion carried.

Closed Session: According to NC G.S. §143-318.11 subsections (a)(6) & (a)(3), Mr. Greg Whitfield, Board Chair, requested the board go into a closed session to review personnel and consult with the board attorney. **On a motion by Rakeem Brawley, seconded by Kerry Pennell, the board unanimously voted to go into closed session. Motion carried.**

New Employees:

Casey Cox, Math Teacher, MHS

Waithira Machua-Thairu, EC Teacher (50 %), MHS, 03/11/2024

Tony Cozzone, Assistant Coach, MMS, 03/14/2023

Terri Crider, Interim Pre-K Teacher Assistant, RRES, 03/12/2024

Doreen Fasciana, Bus Driver/Custodian, MMS, 03/11/2024

Shakia Hayes, EC Teacher Assistant, SES, 03/11/2024

Leonardo Ontiveros Arias, Assistant Soccer Coach, MMS, 02/16/2024

Jodi Rockness, Substitute Teacher, MGSD, 03/04/2024
Carmen Simmons, Substitute Teacher, MGSD, 03/11/2024
Laquitta Vanderburg, Technology Assistant, EMIS, 03/11/2024

Rehire:

Kelly Cilley, Substitute Teacher, MGSD, 03/01/2024
Karmen Guzman, Substitute Teacher, MGSD, 03/11/2024

Retirement:

Julie Blocker, CTE Coordinator, MHS, 06/28/2024, 25 Years of Service to MGSD and the State of NC
Virginia Huffstickler, Director of Student Accountability, Student Services, 06/28/2024, 25 Years of Service to MGSD and the State of NC
Shelley Laska, EC Compliance Specialist, SS, 06/28/2024, 28 Years of Service to MGSD and 30 Years of Service to the State of NC
Amelia McComas, Instructional Coach, MMS, 05/29/2024, 19 Years of Service to MGSD and 30 Years of Service to the State of NC
Stephen Tate ROTC Teacher, MHS, 06/28/2024, 24 Years of Service to MGSD and the State of NC
Penny Tucker, Art Teacher, SES, 05/24/2024, 29 Years of Service to MGSD and the State of NC

Non-Continuing:

Alexa Franklin, Lead Teacher (BASP), MIS, 05/22/2024
Patrick Leak, Custodian, EMIS, 03/18/2024
Katherine Lewis, Music Teacher, PVES, 03/22/2024
Cassandra Rowell, Substitute, SN, 02/20/2024
Melissa Sutton, Teacher Assistant/Bus

On a motion by Kerry Pennell, seconded by Monica Bender, the board voted unanimously to approve the personnel list as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Debbie Marsh, seconded by Rakeem Brawley, the board voted unanimously to adjourn from closed session.

There being no further business, on a motion by Monica Bender, seconded by Rakeem Brawley, the meeting was adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Jason D. Gardner, Secretary
Board of Education